



BOOK NO.
812 Sm68g

ACCESSION

261756 ✓



Form 16 20M-5-27

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1223 03672 0325

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Careful usage of books is expected, and any injury or loss is to be paid for by the borrower. A fine of five cents will be imposed for each day or fraction thereof that this book is kept overtime.

SEE DATE WHEN DUE BELOW

JAN 5 - '28

APR 15 '28


AUG 26 '28

AUG 27 '29

OCT 25 1930

OCT 1 '32

OCT 15 '32



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

Going Crooked

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

From a Tale of Hoffman's (Aaron's)

BY

WINCHELL SMITH AND WILLIAM COLLIER

COPYRIGHT, 1925, BY JOHN GOLDEN AND WILLIAM COLLIER
(Under the title of "Re: Ward")

COPYRIGHT, 1926, BY WINCHELL SMITH, WILLIAM COLLIER,
AND JOHN GOLDEN

All Rights Reserved

AUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that "GOING CROOKED," being fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Empire, including the Dominion of Canada, and the other countries of the Copyright Union, is subject to royalty, and anyone presenting the play without the consent of the owners or their authorized agents will be liable to the penalties by law provided. The amateur acting rights are reserved for the present in all cities and towns where there are stock companies. Royalty will be quoted on application for those cities and towns where it may be presented by amateurs. Applications for the amateur acting rights must be made to Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. For professional production, write John Golden, 139 West 44th Street, New York, N. Y. All unauthorized performances will be prosecuted.

NEW YORK
SAMUEL FRENCH
PUBLISHER
25 WEST 45TH STREET

LONDON
SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.
26 SOUTHAMPTON STREET
STRAND

812
Sm 689
261756

"GOING CROOKED"

All Rights Reserved

Especial notice should be taken that the possession of this book without a valid contract for production first having been obtained from the publisher, confers no right or license to professionals or amateurs to produce the play publicly or in private for gain or charity.

In its present form this play is dedicated to the reading public only, and no performance, representation, production, recitation, public reading or radio broadcasting may be given except by special arrangement with Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York.

Amateur royalty quoted on application to Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

Whenever the play is produced the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French of New York."

Attention is called to the penalty provided by law for any infringement of the author's rights, as follows:

"SECTION 4966:—Any person publicly performing or representing any dramatic or musical composition for which copyright has been obtained, without the consent of the proprietor of said dramatic or musical composition, or his heirs and assigns, shall be liable for damages thereof, such damages in all cases to be assessed at such sum, not less than one hundred dollars for the first and fifty dollars for every subsequent performance, as to the court shall appear to be just. If the unlawful performance and representation be wilful and for profit, such person or persons shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be imprisoned for a period not exceeding one year."—U. S. Revised Statutes: Title 60, Chap 3.

THE CAST
(*In the order of their appearance*)

CHARACTERS

PLAYERS

JOHN BARTISH	<i>John Marvin</i>
LEILA LEIGH	<i>Leila Hyams</i>
WILLIAM NOYES	<i>William Kirkland</i>
CHARLES BURNHAM	<i>Charles Laite</i>
FLORENCE OSBORNE	<i>Florence Mason</i>
JOSEPH DRAKE	<i>Joseph Allen</i>
WILLIAM WARD	<i>William Collier</i>
FRANK DUGAN	<i>Frank Monroe</i>
MARTIN MEEHAN	<i>Martin Heisey</i>
GEORGE FLINT	<i>George Schiller</i>
SHIRLEY BURNHAM	<i>Shirley Grey</i>

The Three Acts occur in the apartments of
William Ward.

The Action takes place within 24 hours.

Going Crooked

SCENE: *The curtain rises, showing living room of a suite on top floor of a swagger New York hotel.*

Down stage, L.I, is entrance to roof garden. Buzzer for hall door, C. Straight across the back, occupying most of the back wall, R., are very large wide windows. Through these windows, which are practical and open in like French windows, is seen a view of the city, sky-scrapers, etc.

At L.I is seen a winding stairway of stone or brick that ascends to the roof garden above. The R.C. balcony is important and should be at such an angle that the action on same can be seen from all parts of the house. There is a side entrance off stage from the balcony to bedroom on R. On the R. side of room down stage is entrance to Bill's bedroom. This room must have a door in full view of the audience.

There is a cabinet and chair in R.I entrance. On cabinet is a large fancy jardinere. In the upper R. corner is a fireplace with fire screen, logs and other fireside properties. A mantel-piece above holds a clock, some odd books and on either end we see two pieces of bric-a-brac. On the wall above this mantel is a large picture, and on the wall above door R.I hangs a rare tapestry. On wall above French windows R.C. is another picture, while on the wall near the door L.C., which leads to a foyer hall, hangs a brass plaque. Down R. we have a large easy

chair with false pocket for picture (Act III) and beside it a hassock, upholstered in like material, a book is on this hassock.

Between the door L.C. and windows R.C. we have a small gold console table with books and an odd lamp thereon. On the L. wall between doors one and two is a large console table, holding some pink roses in a large jar; a picture of Florence and many magazines and two bottles of liquor. Above this table hangs a large mirror, while above this mirror hangs another large painting. There is a large desk table L.C. and two chairs at each end, with one in the C. behind the desk. On this desk we find writing materials, a brass set, one small whiskey glass, telephone, framed picture of Florence. Cigarette box, etc., etc.

On the floor under desk a waste paper basket.

The door L.2 leads into Charlie's bedroom and as the door opens the audience can see a large hat rack there.

A brown rug covers the stage floor. Off L.C., into the foyer hall (and thereby to the elevator, L.), is a large settee under a window. There are pillows and books on this settee, and on the window sill a large jar of red roses. The windows are all nicely curtained and at the beam over the French windows R.C. hang a pair of heavy tapestry drapes. A single chair and cushion stands down R. against the wall, between door R.1 and the fireplace and an odd chair up stage L.C. near the French windows.

One can also go from the foyer hall onto the balcony R. by means of a door in the backing. Entrance to elevator is off L. from the foyer.

ACT I

AT RISE: *Stage is dark, music heard. Lights are up in entrance hall.*

Phone rings as curtain rises.

The door D.I opens and JOHN enters. He carries large tray of cocktail glasses, empty. He puts tray on table L. Puts on lights. Phone rings. Goes to phone, speaks into it.

JOHN. (*Assuming dignified manner*) Hello—— (*Sits.*) Yes—no, Mr. Ward has not been here all the evening—— (*Pause.*) We have been trying to locate him for two hours—— He is giving a party here tonight and all his guests are here, but we can't find Mr. Ward! Certainly, sir—just a moment—I'll write it down——(*Writing*)—Frank Clayton——(*Writing*)—seriously injured—motor accident—Roosevelt Hospital—— (*Stops writing. LEILA appears at door D.I. Enters and stands, looking at JOHN.*) Yes, sir—I'll tell Mr. Ward the moment he comes in—— Good-bye. (*Rises, crosses R. Sees LEILA, gives slight start, then draws himself up, bows like a servant.*)

LEILA. (*Greatly surprised, in loud tone*) Why, John!

JOHN. (*Taking step toward her, bows*) Miss Leigh!

LEILA. But what is it? What does it all mean? (*Crosses front of table.*)

JOHN. It means that——(*LEILA looks startled*)—I am only a servant.

LEILA. (*As if she couldn't believe it*) I don't believe it.

JOHN. (*Smiles*) You saw me serving cocktails to Mr. Ward's guests——

LEILA. (*Still incredulous*) And you are Mr. Ward's servant?

JOHN. No—I am Mr. Burnham's valet——

LEILA. And all the stories you told me on these wonderful afternoons at the Museum—were—were—lies?

JOHN. (*Looks at her, with emotion*) No—(*LEILA turns to JOHN*)—they weren't lies, Miss Leigh—— (*She looks at him.*) They were true—but I didn't tell all—— How my fortune was swept away in the war. How I took another name—and became a valet——

LEILA. Oh—how awful!

JOHN. Oh, I did not care so very much—to be a servant—to earn my living—was strange—and interesting—until that first day at the Museum—(*Turns to her*)—when I talked to you. Life changed for me that day, Miss Leigh—when you suddenly asked me who I was—I was ashamed to tell the truth—so I told you what I had been. Now you know—(*Turns to R.*) Of course, you will not speak to me again.

LEILA. (*Turns up*) Speak to you! Why, I think more of you than ever!

JOHN. You wonderful child!

(*Enter WILLIE NOYES from L.I. JOHN stretches out his arms to take LEILA, changes attitude suddenly and bows. WILLIE stands, watching LEILA; surprised, looks around, sees WILLIE and crosses to him.*)

LEILA. (*Talking very fast*) Well—who wants me—Florence? You go back and tell her I'll be up

there in a minute—— (CHARLIE enters, L.2.) Did you hear me, Willie? (WILLIE turns and goes out D.I. LEILA talks after him as CHARLIE comes C., watching) Mr. Burnham—have you had any word from your friend Mr. Ward? I've never met him—

CHARLIE. You're at his party——

LEILA. Florence Osborne had me invited—— (Crosses C. to JOHN.)

CHARLIE. John—take that Scotch and Rye upstairs. (JOHN bows and starts.) Come along—be lively!

(JOHN crosses up behind table, gets two bottles of liquor from stand, L. Exits, L.I.)

LEILA. (Crosses front of desk) You sha'n't talk to John like that——

CHARLIE. (Surprised, then laughs) That's the way you talked to that nice boy just now. (Comes down L.C.)

LEILA. Yes—he is nice—but he's just a boy—and I've found out that boys bore me! They are not—well, they're not like—John.

CHARLIE. What do you know about my valet, Miss Leigh?

LEILA. I think I know a *lot* more about him than you do, Mr. Burnham——

CHARLIE. What do you mean?

(FLORENCE enters from D.L.I.)

FLORENCE. (Back of chair, L. of desk) Why—I couldn't imagine where you'd got to, Leila.

LEILA. (Crosses to front of chair, R. of desk) I found that private stairway led down to Mr. Ward's apartments—so I sneaked down to see if he hadn't come. Why have you got your wrap on? (Crosses L.)

FLORENCE. I'm going home!

LEILA. (*Horried*) Home!

FLORENCE. Yes.

LEILA. But, Florence—if you go home I'll have to go, too——

FLORENCE. I'm sorry—get your wraps, dear—I'll wait here for you. (*Crosses up c.*)

LEILA. Now, isn't that poisonous? (*Crosses L. to door.*)

(*WARN Music.*)

CHARLIE. I'm sure Bill will be here soon, Miss Osborne.

FLORENCE. No doubt—but I don't care to wait any longer.

LEILA. (*Crosses to L. of table*) And you can't blame her. The man you're engaged to, giving you a grand birthday party, and then not show up——

FLORENCE. (*Almost crying*) Leila!

LEILA. (*Crosses to L.I door*) All right—we'll go—but you'll have to wait just a few minutes—I've got to go and say something to somebody and you know who, Mr. Burnham—— (*Exits, D.I.*)

(*JOHN enters c. door with tray, decanter and glass, puts it on console table, L., and takes tray of glasses from same table off with him c.*)

FLORENCE. What did Leila mean?

(*MUSIC.*)

(*Music: "What'll I Do." Play two choruses, stop, applause off stage; play one chorus, swell music, when door down stage L. opens, diminish when it closes.*)

CHARLIE. What?

FLORENCE. She said you knew who she wanted to see.

CHARLIE. I'm afraid it was John.

FLORENCE. (*Mystified*) Your valet? Good heavens—did she come down here to talk to your valet?

CHARLIE. Well—she may have.

FLORENCE. (*Crosses L.C.*) I never know what that child will do next. (*Worried.*) I must go and look after her! (*Crosses L.*) Excuse me. (*Exits, D.L.I.*)

(*CHARLIE is by desk, stands thinking a moment, then he glances at paper on desk, which is the note JOHN has written at the beginning of the Act, picks it up, reads.*)

CHARLIE. That's too bad!! (*Enter DRAKE up L.C. Door open.*) Well, Drake, did you find Mr. Ward?

DRAKE. I couldn't find Mr. W. anywhere, Mr. B. You don't know where to look for a guy since prohibition, Mr. B.

CHARLIE. Why don't you call me Mr. Burnham instead of Mr. B.? I never know who you mean—Mr. E., Mr. W.—that's a frightful habit—calling people by their initials. Try to break yourself of it.

DRAKE. I am—I got in that habit when I was working in the bank. (*Crosses c.*)

CHARLIE. Bank? What bank? (*Looks to room L.*)

DRAKE. The Faro Bank. That's where I met Mr. W. God bless him——

CHARLIE. (*Looks at message on desk*) You like Mr. Ward—don't you——?

DRAKE. (*Almost in tears*) I'd die for Mr. W.

CHARLIE. You would, eh?

DRAKE. Yes, I'd die for him. He saved my life

one night in that same bank, and I stuck with him ever since, and I'll never leave him as long as I have a roof over me head and a decent suit of his clothes to wear.

CHARLIE. (*Looking at paper, crosses to desk for paper*) Well, here's something you can do for him.

DRAKE. (*Follows CHARLIE L.*) Then I'll do it—no matter what it is——

CHARLIE. (*Interrupting*) You know Mr. Clayton?

DRAKE. Sure I know him, and I know his wife, Mrs. Clayton. She's got three of the finest little C.'s you ever see—saw. Mr. C.'s a great friend of Mr. W.'s. Mr. W. thinks so much of him, he took him out and got him loaded and he lost his job, and Mr. W. sends him fifty dollars every week until he can get another job.

CHARLIE. Well, Drake, there's a message here that Mr. Clayton is hurt.

DRAKE. What?

CHARLIE. Seriously—in an automobile smash-up. He's at Roosevelt Hospital and they have telephoned for Mr. Ward. Now you better go down there and see if there's anything you can do. (*Crosses to L.*)

(DRAKE, *rushing for his hat and coat, starts for door up L.C. as JOHN enters, D.L.I. DRAKE looks at JOHN with hatred.*)

JOHN. (*Very dignified air*) Here, you—where is Mr. Ward? (*Crosses back of table c. and up.*)

DRAKE. How do I know!

JOHN. Don't presume to be impertinent! (*Going to him.*)

DRAKE. (*Not understanding*) What's that?

JOHN. (*Picks up paper*) I have here an important message for your master.

DRAKE. (*Grabbing it*) Anything here for Mr. W. you let alone—see?

JOHN. (*Very angry*) Why, you——

DRAKE. (*Rushing at him*) Say—you try to get fresh with me and I'll bust something over your dome.

JOHN. I wouldn't soil my hands on you. (*Crosses to L.*)

DRAKE. (*Can't think of anything mean enough to say*) Listen—I hate you! (*Crosses after JOHN.*)

JOHN. That is of no consequence.

DRAKE. Get this—I got the same job for Mr. W. as you've got with Mr. B. That makes us both val-lies. Only they say you're great and I am a bum. Now maybe they're right.

JOHN. There's no doubt of it.

DRAKE. Well, do you know why? Because val-lie-in' ain't my regular business.

JOHN. That is obvious——

DRAKE. And I wouldn't valley for no one else on earth. Even my own mother——

JOHN. Any more words from you are superfluous. (*Exits, L.I.*)

DRAKE. And I don't want to speak to you, either—because that's superfluous. Call me an obvious—(*Going to door up L.C.*) I know a lot of words, too. Let me hear you try to spell indisposable. (*Exits up L.C.*)

(*C. window opens and WARD sticks his head in, looks about, then enters, flask bus. NOTE: Have decanter on table, L. He is only trying to avoid the police, who chased him after the accident. Cough. CHARLIE closes door heavily, enters up L., assumes surprise at seeing WARD.*)

CHARLIE. Where in the name of Heaven have you been?

(*Music: "Mama Loves Papa." Four choruses.*)

WARD. Have you had the police up here?

CHARLIE. (*Greatly frightened*) Police!

WARD. Don't call 'em up.

CHARLIE. (*Trying to be off-handed*) Why—why should the police come up here?

WARD. They're after me.

CHARLIE. What have you done?

WARD. (*Crosses R.*) I don't know exactly. Smashed my car all to bits for one thing.

CHARLIE. An accident?

WARD. You don't think I did it on purpose, do you? (*Sees decanter, suddenly shuddering.*)

CHARLIE. How did it happen?

WARD. (*Crosses L. to decanter*) Well, we were going along the drive——

CHARLIE. Fast?

WARD. About sixty—when all of a sudden something hit us—— (*Pours drink.*)

CHARLIE. What?

WARD. I think it was Grant's Tomb. Then we all separated—— (*Drinks.*)

CHARLIE. Had the chauffeur been drinking?

WARD. I should say he had! I was the chauffeur. (*Sits.*)

CHARLIE. How many were there in your car?

WARD. Around ten. (*Crosses R., takes decanter.*) The rest of the party refused to get in. (*Starts to pour drink.*)

CHARLIE. You'd been to a party?

WARD. Yes—Elliot had to give it. He lost the match and I won——

CHARLIE. Billiard match?

WARD. No—drinking match—— (*CHARLIE crosses C., laughing. During following speech WARD pours out drink.*) What are you laughing at? I'll drink you out.

CHARLIE. Was anybody hurt?

WARD. I don't know. When I came to, I went to look for the others—but all I could find was cops. They were running around everywhere looking for something. I asked a man what they wanted and he said "the chauffeur"—then I ran too—and—everytime I caught sight of a policeman I turned and ran the other way. You'd think I was Charlie Chaplin—I don't know how I got back here, but I think—
(JOHN enters, D.L.I.) Shut that door! (*Drinks.*)
(*MUSIC Loud.*)

JOHN. Pardon, sir— (*Closes door, exits, L.2.*)

CHARLIE. Well, you'd better get up to the party.

WARD. I've had all the parties—I want tonight.

CHARLIE. Listen, Bill. Do you remember a girl named Florence Osborne? The girl you're engaged to?

WARD. Do I remember her! (*Rises.*) What's the matter with you?

CHARLIE. Do you remember promising her a great big party to celebrate her birthday?

WARD. Certainly—Friday night.

(*WARN Music.*)

CHARLIE. Well, this is Friday.

(*"All Alone." Two choruses. Stop. Applause off stage. Play one chorus.*)

WARD. What happened to Thursday?

CHARLIE. That was yesterday, Bill. And all your guests have been up there on the roof for three hours—and Miss Osborne is just about crazy—

(WARD turns and makes a rush for D.L.I. Then stops and looks into mirror between doors L.)

WARD. (*As he is looking at himself*) How do I look?

CHARLIE. (*Crosses back of table*) All right.

WARD. You wouldn't know I'd been drinking—would you?

CHARLIE. Well, I know you so well——

WARD. So does she. Well, here's for a dance!
(*Goes to door D.L.I.*)

CHARLIE. (*With sudden thought*) Say, Bill——
(*WARD stops.*) Was Frank Clayton with you to-night?

WARD. (*Turning, frightened*) Yes!

CHARLIE. (*Seriously*) In the car—when——
(*Front of desk.*)

WARD. (*Going to him c.*) Yes—why—what about it? (*Crosses front of L. chair. FLORENCE enters, D.L.I. Music loud.*) I told you to shut that door!

(*MUSIC Up.*)

FLORENCE. Indeed! (*Closes door, crosses c.*)

WARD. (*Turning so quickly, he staggers just a bit. Pause, while they look at each other*) Good evening! (*Bows.*)

FLORENCE. Oh—— (*Crosses angrily, R.*)

CHARLIE. If you'll excuse me, I'll get myself out of the way. (*Exits up L.2.*)

WARD. Florence—now please don't be angry.
(*Crosses c. to FLORENCE.*)

FLORENCE. (*Turning quickly to him*) Do you know what day this is?

WARD. He just told me—Friday.

FLORENCE. Oh, you do know that!

WARD. (*Crosses to FLORENCE*) And if you'd had as many things happen to you as I've had happen to me today, you'd know it was Friday, too.

FLORENCE. Do you know what Friday?

WARD. Well, I know it's not Good Friday. Only one thing has gone right with me all day—only one.

FLORENCE. What's that?

WARD. I won the match——

FLORENCE. What match?

WARD. Dominoes. (*Slightest stagger.*)

FLORENCE. (*Trying to speak calmly*) Bill, I——
(*Crosses to c. of desk, sits.*) Oh, Bill—— (*Sobs.*
WARD watches, full of remorse and shame.)

WARD. (*Going to her slowly, near chair*) Please
don't cry, Flo—I'm——(*Leans over chair*)—I'm ter-
ribly sorry.

FLORENCE. (*Springs up suddenly, crosses R.C.*)
Sorry! What about—me? How do you suppose I
feel to have those fools up there sneering and mak-
ing fun of me?

WARD. (*Angry*) He did—eh?

FLORENCE. And why wouldn't they? All of them
here at a party—given in my honor—and the man
who was giving me the party away—the man I was
going to marry!

WARD. (*More sober*) Did you say—was going
to marry?

FLORENCE. Yes, I did—and I meant it——
(*WARD drops down stage a bit to chair.*) Father
and everybody have told me what it would mean if
I married you—just misery and neglect. But I
wouldn't listen—I loved you—and I wouldn't believe
you could treat me as you have tonight.

WARD. I didn't mean to, dear—and I'm here now,
I'll go up there and——

FLORENCE. It's too late, Bill. I've come to my
senses at last. You are too irresponsible to marry
me or any other woman. (*Slowly crosses R.*)

(*MUSIC.*)

WARD. (*Going over to her*) You don't mean you
are breaking our engagement?

FLORENCE. Yes. (*Turns and starts L.I.*)

WARD. Where are you going?

FLORENCE. (*Steadily*) I'm going home. (*Starts.*)

WARD. (*Stopping her*) But—— You'll let me
take you——

FLORENCE. No! Thank you—Leila Leigh is staying with me—— (*Crossing L.*) I'll get her——

WARD. (*Going quickly to her*) Oh, but, Florence——

FLORENCE. (*Turning at door, speaking coldly*) Good night! (*She exits quickly, D.L.I.*)

(*SWELL Music As Door Opens.*)

(*DRAKE enters up L.C., comes down L. of WARD in great excitement; WARD stands motionless, look-off after FLORENCE.*)

DRAKE. (*Suddenly slapping his hands together loudly and speaking loudly at the same time*) Oh——

(*WARD, nearly startled out of his senses, jumps and sees him. Closes door.*)

WARD. Can't you see I'm nervous? Look at that? (*Holds out hand in front of DRAKE.*)

DRAKE. (*Looking in direction hand is pointing*) Look at what?

WARD. My hand—you idiot—can't you see it shaking!

DRAKE. (*Face puckered up*) Do you think a drink would help it?

WARD. Help it to shake more—yes! (*Crosses R.C.*)

DRAKE. (*Crying for all he's worth*) Oh—Mr. W.—Mr. W.—Mr. W. (*Chair R. of desk.*)

WARD. What's the matter?

DRAKE. Oh, Mr. W.—it's terrible! (*Sits chair, L.C.*)

WARD. What's terrible?

DRAKE. Poor Mr. C. (*DRAKE cries louder than ever.*)

WARD. (*Grabbing him by the shoulders, pulls him up out of chair*) Who's Mr. C.? (*Shaking him.*)

DRAKE. (*Trying to stop crying*) Clayton, sir—
Frank Clayton. (*Cries.*)

WARD. (*So frightened he speaks quietly*) You
don't mean—dead?

DRAKE. No, sir!

WARD. Thank God!

DRAKE. Not yet. (*WARD crosses L.*)

WARD. (*Quickly*) Where is he?

DRAKE. Roosevelt Hospital.

WARD. (*Going to phone*) Get me a taxi, please.
(*Hangs up phone.*)

DRAKE. Going out, Mr. W.?

WARD. No—I'm just ordering a taxi to drive
around my room here. Get me my hat and coat
quick!

DRAKE. (*Hands him the hat he has in his hand
and begins taking off coat, gives it to WARD. WARD
starts U.C.*) Where are you going?

WARD. (*Putting on coat*) To the hospital.

DRAKE. You can't see him until after the oper-
ation.

WARD. (*Stopping, coat half on*) Operation?
(*Comes back c.*)

DRAKE. Yes—and I got him the greatest surgeon
in New York—I told him you'd be responsible for
all the bills.

WARD. (*Starting out c.*) I must go to see Frank's
wife.

DRAKE. I seen her, Mr. W. She was at the hos-
pital. The poor little thing. She had no money and
the rent coming due tomorrow and I gave her all I
had—two dollars and thirty-five cents—and I told
her you'd send her all she needed in the morning.

WARD. (*Grabbing DRAKE*) Drake! What did
the doctor think Mr. Clayton's chances were?

DRAKE. From what the doctor said, I figured the
odds ought to be at least four to one that he wouldn't
get well.

WARD. Well, you go back to the hospital and tell them to be sure and phone me when it's over.

DRAKE. Yes, sir. (*Takes hat and coat from WARD.*) Oh, Mr. W., what about Mr. M. and his band? (*WARD sits in chair, back of desk.*)

WARD. What's the matter with him?

DRAKE. He says he won't leave until he's paid.

WARD. Well, then, he's here for a run, unless Mr. Davis will pay him and charge it to me.

DRAKE. Mr. D. said you can't have another thing charged until last month's bill is paid. (*Crosses up to door c.*) Oh, Mr. W., you're getting a little stout, aren't you? I can't get your clothes buttoned on me——

WARD. The next time I order clothes—I'll send you for the fitting. (*DRAKE exits, L.C.*)

CHARLIE. (*Enters, L.2. Coming down L.*) I'm awfully sorry, Bill, old pal——

WARD. (*Turning and seeing him*) You know about it?

CHARLIE. (*Sadly, nodding*) Yes—I sent Drake to the hospital——

WARD. I've done a lot of things in my life—but murdering my best friend is a new one——

CHARLIE. (*Scolding*) Oh, don't talk that way. Anyone is apt to have an accident.

WARD. I know.

CHARLIE. (*Crosses to c. Brightly*) Now brace up, Bill. You are in a little trouble.

WARD. (*Springing up*) A little trouble. (*Rises.*) I've lost the only girl I ever really loved—I've got my best friend lying at the point of death—I've got his wife and three children with no one but me to depend on—I've got doctors' and nurses' and hospital bills—I owe a lot of money and I haven't got a nickel in the world. And you say I'm in a little trouble—— (*Goes up stage, turns to CHARLIE.*)

Why, every time I go near that window I feel like jumping out.

CHARLIE. (*Nervously, getting between WARD and the window*) Now don't talk like that, Bill. It's silly.

WARD. (*Crosses R., then L.*) It's not so terribly silly. One jump and I wouldn't owe a cent. (*Sits L.C.*)

CHARLIE. (*Crosses down, sits R. of desk*) Now try to be sensible, Bill. What you need now is a friend. (*WARD looks up at him.*) I guess you know I like you—and I'm the kind who sticks to a pal when he's up against it! (*WARD rises and shakes hands with CHARLIE.*) There's always some way out of everything, Bill—only you mustn't let trouble down you.

WARD. You mustn't, eh?

CHARLIE. Now you haven't noticed anything unusual about *me* for the last few days—have you?

WARD. No——

CHARLIE. Well, I've had all kinds of trouble, but I went right along just as if everything was rosey——

WARD. What was your trouble?

CHARLIE. Tuesday I got word from England that the man I'd put in charge of my business, while I was over here, had robbed me of everything I had, but I never said a word to you——

WARD. Yes, I remember!

CHARLIE. Because just about that time you heard of your uncle's losing all your coin. You'll never know how I wanted to go to you and say "Don't worry, Bill, I've got enough for both of us." (*WARD shakes hands with him again.*) But I couldn't—I was down and out, too. I'd 'a' been in the ocean now—(*Rises*)—but I wanted to stay and see if there wasn't some way I could help you get on your feet—(*Crosses R., shakes hands.*) You really do need a friend now.

WARD. And you let your business in England go just to stay and help me?

CHARLIE. Sure I did. (*Hand shake.*) I've got to sail in a few days—but I'm going to see you through first.

WARD. How?

CHARLIE. First—what's the most important thing?

WARD. Money for Frank Clayton—they are probably operating on him now.

CHARLIE. I don't like operations.

WARD. You don't like them? I never heard of anyone phoning to the ticket agencies for a front cot at one of them. Nobody likes them.

CHARLIE. What I meant is the situation is bad enough, even if the operation is successful, but if the poor fellow should die.

WARD. Don't say that, Charlie. You're not helping me any. You're making me so nervous I'm shaking all over.

CHARLIE. Now, Bill, let's get down to hard tacks. You've got to get hold of some money not only for your own use, but you have Frank's family on your hands.

WARD. I've got a fine chance to support a family. I can't even support myself.

CHARLIE. All right. Now what about your uncle—are you sure he has lost your fortune?

WARD. Positive.

CHARLIE. Everything's gone?

WARD. Everything.

CHARLIE. Has your uncle money of his own?

WARD. Barrels of it.

CHARLIE. Then won't he lend you some?

WARD. Are you asking *me*?

CHARLIE. Yes.

WARD. The answer is, he will not!

CHARLIE. Why—is he close?

WARD. Close? He could crawl between you and a porous plaster. Why—looks stingy and he talks stingy—you know—— (*Imitates him.*) He even wears stingy whiskers—long straggily ones—they look like handle bars.

CHARLIE. Isn't he very old——?

WARD. Oh, yes.

CHARLIE. A hundred and two or——

WARD. No—not a hundred and two. That's his temperature. He's around ninety. But he'll go to par.

CHARLIE. Now, Bill, let's figure this thing out. How much money do you need?

WARD. Just enough to take care of my obligations to Frank's family, and live like a civilized human being.

CHARLIE. About twenty thousand a year?

WARD. Twenty thousand? I could do it for half that—less.

CHARLIE. Don't be silly—you couldn't do it.

WARD. I've got to do it—I'd give up five years of my life, if at the end of that time I could be assured of an income of ten thousand a year.

CHARLIE. Well, that's a cinch, ten thousand a year. That's just a lead pipe for you.

WARD. No, I wouldn't do anything like that. I wouldn't use a lead pipe to get it.

CHARLIE. Well, I hope it won't come to that. First—how much could you live on a week?

WARD. Oh—anything—say fifty dollars a week.

CHARLIE. Don't be silly. You couldn't live on fifty dollars a week. Not very well.

WARD. Well, if I live half as well on fifty dollars a week as I've been living here on nothing a week, I'll be doing pretty well, won't I?

CHARLIE. On fifty dollars a week you could hardly afford this apartment.

WARD. To tell the truth, Charlie, I never could

afford it. I don't need ten rooms. Other men live in one room and a bath, so could I.

CHARLIE. How about clothes?

WARD. I've got enough clothes to last me three years and without my valet, ten.

CHARLIE. Are you quite sure you're willing to give up all your luxuries?

WARD. Willing? I'm anxious to begin.

CHARLIE. I'll bet I can figure out a scheme that will net you some money—a lot of money.

WARD. How is that?

CHARLIE. The same way I've always done whenever I had to have money. The newspapers——

WARD. Newspapers?

(WARN Phone.)

CHARLIE. Do you know that every day in the newspapers there's a chance to get money—if you only know enough to find it? *(WARD shakes his head.)* I'll prove it to you. Have you got a newspaper?

WARD. *(Rising, crosses R.)* I can get one.

CHARLIE. *(Sees paper on stand)* Never mind. Here's one right here. *(Gets paper, comes back to desk.)*

WARD. *(Crosses to desk, L.)* Do you mean to say there is a way for me to get some money in that newspaper? *(Crosses up to CHARLIE.)*

CHARLIE. I've never had it fail yet—now let's see. *(Telephone bell rings, both start, then look front.)*

(PHONE Rings.)

WARD. The hospital—— *(Starts trembling to take phone.)*

CHARLIE. You'd better let me. *(Picks up phone. WARD has bus. all through the following, speaks very easily)* Hello—— Yes, he's here—— Oh—yes—yes, he did—— Who—the police? Oh—— Ah—ha—— *(Change of voice)* Yes—— Oh, why, how do you do? Where are you? Why, yes, I

think you can—I know it would please him—— All right, do—good-bye. (*Crosses R. quickly.*)

WARD. Say, what was all that?

CHARLIE. (*Running to door, R.*) That's good news. (*Exits, leaving door open.*)

WARD. (*Calling off L.*) You mean a way I can get some money?

CHARLIE. (*Off R.*) It's better than that. (*Coming on R. He has pillow, silk bed cover.*) Don't ask questions—sit here. (*WARD does so as CHARLIE throws things he's carrying on armchair, L.C., then he gets small chair and places it below armchair.*)

(*WARN Buzzer.*)

WARD. I'm not going to bed, you know. Say, listen——

CHARLIE. Don't ask questions.

WARD. Is this some scheme to get me away?

CHARLIE. (*Places pillow in armchair*) Better than that—sit down there. (*Indicating armchair, half pushes WARD into chair. Puts his feet on small chair, takes up silk coverlet. Buzzer sounds. CHARLIE whispers*) Quick, the buzzer!

WARD. Who's brother?

CHARLIE. (*Spreading coverlet over WARD and tucking it under his feet*) I said—"The buzzer." Now shut your eyes and let me do the talking——

WARD. But see here——

CHARLIE. You do as I say! You're asleep! (*WARD closes his eyes as CHARLIE hurries to grating door, opens it, looks out into hall, beckons someone to come in. FLORENCE enters, U.L.C., very frightened, on tiptoes; she is about to whisper to CHARLIE when he puts his fingers to his lips, pantomime her not to. He turns and points to WARD. Whispers*) Ssh!

(*DOOR Slam Off L.C.*)

FLORENCE. (*With a little gasp*) Oh! (*Goes R.*)

CHARLIE. Sleeping. (*FLORENCE goes to WARD*)

silently. CHARLIE *places chair for her and she sits L. of WARD.*)

FLORENCE. They say it was a terrible accident. There's just nothing left of his car.

CHARLIE. How did you find out about it?

FLORENCE. That reporter who was here to write about the party called me up. Leila and I hadn't gone to bed—so I sent for Willie Noyes to come and get us and Leila and I came here—— (*Looking down at WARD. Whispering and looking at him tenderly.*) My poor darling. (*Kisses WARD and turns to CHARLIE.*) How wonderfully he looks. (*WARD raises his head, looks at her.*)

CHARLIE. He's all right—just a shock!

FLORENCE. Are you sure he's not seriously hurt?

CHARLIE. Positive. The doctor said he'd be all right in no time.

FLORENCE. Thank Heaven. (*She turns back to WARD, bends over him and kisses him lightly on the forehead. WARD stirs, takes his left hand from under the cover.*) I hope I haven't wakened him—— (*CHARLIE crosses around R. WARD snores slightly.*)

CHARLIE. No—I hear him sleeping.

FLORENCE. Oh, the poor boy. And, Mr. Burnham, it was all my fault. (*Kneels.*)

CHARLIE. How was that?

FLORENCE. I said terrible things to him. Broke off our engagement and left him—and after that he must have gone right out and——

WARD. I—I didn't think——

CHARLIE. Now, Bill, old man, you mustn't talk. Just go to sleep again. Everything's all right—and Miss Osborne's here——

WARD. What?

CHARLIE. I say Miss Osborne's here.

WARD. Florence.

CHARLIE. Yes.

WARD. No—she left me—and she's never coming back——

FLORENCE. Bill, she *is* back! (WARD *turning slowly to her.*)

WARD. (*Weakly, but excited*) Florence. How short she looks. Is that you, Florence?

FLORENCE. Yes, dear. And I'm so sorry for what I said.

WARD. You didn't mean it?

FLORENCE. No—not a word of it—and I want to hear you say you forgive me. (WARD *raises left hand, draws her over where he can whisper.* CHARLIE *crosses to L.2.*) Bill, darling—— (*Kisses him and puts her face down beside his.*) Oh, I'm so happy that you are not badly hurt, dear—and I'm so glad our engagement isn't broken.

WARD. That's just what I was thinking of. Do you know I'm flat broke?

FLORENCE. And do you think I'd let that make a difference?

WARD. You mean you are willing to wait—and give me a chance to see if I can make something of myself?

FLORENCE. Bill, dear—I'd rather wait forever for you than to marry anyone else on earth.

WARD. Then I'm going to try.

FLORENCE. Oh, Bill, I knew you would some time—I knew it.

WARD. See that stuff over there? (*Trying to indicate.*)

FLORENCE. Where?

WARD. In the decanter.

FLORENCE. (*Smiling*) Well?

WARD. That's out—and loafing, that's out—and, Florence——

FLORENCE. Please don't say I'm out.

WARD. Not if I can make good. (FLORENCE *rises.* WARD *sits up.*) Florence, I want you to give

me a little time to get some money—enough to gain your father's consent—I won't have people saying I married you for your money.

FLORENCE. (*Very pleased*) Bill, I'm awfully glad you said that. But I'm awfully sorry I've got to wait.

WARD. I don't know why you should wait for me.

FLORENCE. You ought to know, you darn fool—because I'm crazy about you. (*They kiss as hall door L.U. opens. LEILA enters.*)

LEILA. How is he?

FLORENCE. He's all right now.

LEILA. Oh, good. (*WARD starts to rise, crosses c. with FLORENCE holding on to his arm.*)

FLORENCE. This is Miss Leila Leigh—Mr. Ward.

WARD. How do you do?

LEILA. Hello, Bill. Oh, I suppose you're feeling terribly upset and nervous, being the cause of that horrible accident. (*WARD turns to speak, but LEILA rattles right on. Bus. for WARD.*) I suppose you've been up all night and drank oodles and oodles of liquor—men always do, the minute they have the least thing to worry them—it's quick, Watson, the bottle—and the poisonous stuff they sell nowadays I don't wonder you're a bit jumpy.

WARD. You through now? You are mistaken, it's not poisonous. You need never be afraid of any liquor you see in my house—I always test it—I put my finger in it and if the nail comes off I never drink it. It's very good liquor, Miss Leigh.

LEILA. Don't call me Miss Leigh. Call me Leila. You don't mind me calling you Bill?

WARD. Why, no, but—

FLORENCE. Leila has heard me call you Bill—occasionally.

LEILA. (*Laughing*) Occasionally! Now, wouldn't

that poison you! It's Bill this and Bill that—for breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner. Of course the luncheons are out—we're both on a diet—although I did sneak three cocktails tonight.

WARD. Let's all have one now.

LEILA. No, thanks. I'm off them for a while. I should think you'd be, too, after tonight. Of course, Flo, all this is none of my business—

WARD. Did you just get on to that fact? And besides, you said you had three cocktails tonight.

LEILA. Well, I didn't have thirty.

WARD. Well, I'm not on a diet. (*JOHN enters from U.L.*)

LEILA. (*Hurries to him*) Oh, John!

JOHN. (*Bowing*) Miss Leigh!

LEILA. Miss Osborne and Mr. Ward have a lot to say to each other and I feel in the way. Could you show me some place where we—where I could wait?

JOHN. Certainly, Miss. You may wait on the roof garden. (*He stands up by door L.*)

LEILA. Thank you, John. You'll excuse me?

WARD. I will.

LEILA. Now; take your time, Florence. I'm in no hurry. (*Exits L.I. JOHN follows her out.*)

FLORENCE. I don't like that.

WARD. What?

FLORENCE. That girl is perfectly bewitched by John.

WARD. What of it?

FLORENCE. But he's Mr. Burnham's valet. Think of it, Bill—a valet—and her father is worth millions!

WARD. Then she can afford a valet.

FLORENCE. It would break her father's heart—he adores her. (*Knock on door U.L.*)

WARD. Come in.

(WILLIE enters, faultlessly dressed. WILLIE bows to both and is about to speak.)

FLORENCE. How do you do? This is Mr. Ward, Mr. Noyes.

WARD. How do you do? (WILLIE is about to speak.)

FLORENCE. Are you looking for Leila? (WILLIE nods, starts down L.I.) She's upstairs— (Points to L.I. door. WILLIE turns, about to speak.) That's right—up where we had the party tonight. (WILLIE bows and exits L.I.)

WARD. What's wrong with silence and fun?

FLORENCE. That's the man Leila's father wants her to marry.

WARD. Thought you said her father adored her. Is that man in love with Leila? (Crosses R. to FLORENCE.)

FLORENCE. Terribly.

WARD. No wonder he can't talk. I don't think he gets a chance.

(WILLIE and LEILA enter L.2.)

LEILA. Willie Noyes—if you're spying on me, I'll never let you speak to me again. Wait downstairs. (WILLIE goes to upper door, L.C., opens it, turns and is about to speak.) In a few minutes, yes.

WARD. Sh—sh—— (WILLIE exits C.)

LEILA. That man's as hard to lose as a double chin!

WARD. (Motions to FLORENCE to tell LEILA) Flo—tell her——

FLORENCE. Well, Leila—it's all settled about Bill and me.

LEILA. What——?

FLORENCE. We're going to be married.

LEILA. When?

FLORENCE. Just as soon as Bill makes enough money to get father's consent.

LEILA. Rot—father's consent and money. I'll marry when and whom I please. And if you wait till Bill earns enough money they'll have to wheel you to the altar.

WARD. Oh, I don't know, Florence—if a little scheme I have goes through you won't have to wait very long.

FLORENCE. What do you mean, Bill? (LEILA starts U.C.)

WARD. Don't go, Miss Leila. I want you to hear this—as I don't want it to go any further than the Pacific Ocean. (*Struts to door L.2. haughty look at LEILA, opens door, calls off, very business-like tone*) Oh, Charlie! (LEILA crosses R. FLORENCE crosses L.)

CHARLIE. (*Offstage*) Yes?

WARD. About how much did you say I'd realize on that newspaper scheme of mine?

CHARLIE. Oh, between fifty and a hundred thousand dollars. (WARD looks at the girls, smiles.) Of course, it all depends— (WARD shuts door quickly.)

FLORENCE. Oh, Bill, is it really true?

WARD. Yes.

FLORENCE. How did you do it, Bill?

WARD. (*Stalling*) I just used this. (*Points to head*) Wait till I use both sides!

FLORENCE. (*To LEILA*) Isn't it wonderful!

LEILA. It's grand!

FLORENCE. I'm dying to know.

WARD. I'm dying to tell you—and I will—tomorrow at dinner—or better still, can you have tea with me at five o'clock?

FLORENCE. Surely—where?

WARD. Here.

LEILA. Thank you, Bill. I'll be here at five sharp. (*Crosses to door c.*)

WARD. You know, Florence, there's one thing going to worry me.

FLORENCE. What?

WARD. That she'll be late.

LEILA. Oh, no—I won't be late. (*Drops down left.*)

FLORENCE. Come on, Leila, you mustn't keep poor Willie waiting any longer. (*FLORENCE and LEILA cross c.*)

LEILA. I'll be here at five sharp! (*FLORENCE and LEILA exit L.C.*)

WARD. (*Pours out drink, sees FLORENCE's picture, looks at it and pours drink back in bottle. He crosses to door L.2 and calls*) Charlie—Charlie—come out here—— (*CHARLIE enters L.2, goes to c. of desk.*) It's all right—Flo and I have made up—we're happy—and she's going to wait.

CHARLIE. How long?

WARD. (*Crosses c.*) That's up to you—until you get the money. Did you find anything?

CHARLIE. Did I find anything? What would you say if I told you I had worked out a scheme to get you fifty thousand dollars?

WARD. I wouldn't say anything. I would be speechless. I'd just make motions.

CHARLIE. Then it's a cinch, if you're game. (*Sits c. of desk.*)

WARD. I told you I'd give you up five years of my life. Fifty thousand dollars, eh?

CHARLIE. Sure.

WARD. Wait a minute. (*Crosses to chair R. of desk. In phone*) Hello—I want the office. I want to talk to Mr. Davis. Yes, Mr. Davis, the manager. (*To CHARLIE*) He was very Ritz with me yesterday. Told Drake he was going to cut off my charge

account. (*In phone*) I want him. Mr. William Ward.

CHARLIE. What are you going to do?

WARD. I'm going to give him a piece of my mind and tell him to send up my bill. Hello. Is that you, Mr. Davis? Well, this is Mr. Ward, Mr. William Ward. Now get this—I want you to send up——

CHARLIE. You haven't any money.

WARD. Some ice water. (*Hangs up phone.*)

CHARLIE. You haven't the money yet. But I've found a way for you to get it.

WARD. What is it?

CHARLIE. Here's the scheme. One hundred and fifty thousand dollars' reward for the recovery of Lombardi's painting, Maria, and the capture and conviction of the thief. There, isn't that great?

WARD. I don't see what good it's going to do me.

CHARLIE. It's one of the most famous paintings known. It's priceless. It was stolen from the museum a month ago. They're searching for it all over the world.

WARD. Well, I don't know where it is.

CHARLIE. Don't you get the idea?

WARD. No.

CHARLIE. Even if the painting is never found, the owner is offering fifty thousand dollars for the capture of the thief.

WARD. Well, I'm not a detective. I can't find the thief.

CHARLIE. But I can. I know him.

WARD. Who is he?

CHARLIE. You.

WARD. Ah! That's silly. That's a terrible thing—(*Crosses c., pacing up and down*)—Charlie. You had me all excited about the fifty thousand dollars. I had the money in the bank, and now you suggest this ridiculous idea.

CHARLIE. No, it isn't. You can trust Drake, can't you?

WARD. Yes—with anything.

CHARLIE. Well, suppose Drake goes to Dugan's Detective Agency and tells Dugan that you're the thief. Dugan comes here and finds evidence of the theft in this room and gives you the third degree. You admit you'd stolen it. He takes you to court. You plead guilty. Then what happens?

WARD. Yes. That's what I'm thinking.

CHARLIE. Drake gets the fifty thousand dollars, takes care of Clayton and his family, and after you have served your term you come out independent, with plenty of the long green.

WARD. And plenty of short hair. No, I will not go to jail. Is that all you could find in that paper? *(Crosses up and down stage.)*

CHARLIE. That's a great chance. You hardly ever find anything as easy as that.

WARD. Do you seriously think of me going to jail?

CHARLIE. Yes, for a time. What's so bad about that?

WARD. What's good about it?

CHARLIE. Fifty thousand dollars, that's what's good about it.

WARD. Have you thought of the scandal?

CHARLIE. That will soon blow over, and later you may be able to prove you weren't guilty after all.

WARD. What do you suppose Florence would say to all this?

CHARLIE. There's the kind of a girl who would stick. She'd try to help you, come to see you in prison Ladies' Day, then you could tell her the whole thing. How you had to get the money, all about Clayton, and that you decided to go to prison rather than desert that family. Why, she would

think you were a hero. Anyone would. You'd be one.

WARD. I don't want to be a hero. Not that kind of a hero.

CHARLIE. Listen, Bill. I hope you don't think I'm trying to talk you into this.

WARD. You don't appear to be trying to talk me out of it.

CHARLIE. I'm only explaining how it could be done, that's all. Good Lord, I don't want you to do it. If you think that, we will say no more about it. But you've got to have money. Maybe you can raise it some other way. *(Phone rings.)*

(PHONE.)

WARD. Hello. Yes, Doctor. It is. That's wonderful. Wonderful news. Let him have everything he wants. Everything, and send all bills to me. Don't send them right away, but send them to me, and I don't know how to thank you, Doctor. Yes, Doctor. Good-night.

CHARLIE. That sounds like good news.

WARD. It is. Frank will get well, but he'll be in that hospital a long time and I've got to have a lot of money. Charlie, can't you shake up that paper and find any way but this prison scheme?

CHARLIE. I can't find a thing.

WARD. But Charlie, that's terrible to go to prison and be branded as a thief. But I've got to get hold of some money. Suppose I did consent. Mind you, I haven't yet, but suppose I did. Tell me what have I got to do?

CHARLIE. All you have got to do is plead guilty and Drake gets the fifty thousand dollars. I'll take care of the rest.

WARD. How long do you think I'd have to stay in jail?

CHARLIE. Not very long. You would have to engage a crackerjack lawyer, and after you've been

in a short time, and with some time off for good behavior, I'll bet you won't be in more than two years.

WARD. Oh, for God's sake, Charlie. Two years. I thought you were going to say two weeks. I wouldn't want to stay in for two years—break rocks for two years.

CHARLIE. Nothing like it.

WARD. Wouldn't I have to work very hard?

CHARLIE. No. As a rule they put you to work at whatever trade or profession you might have.

WARD. But I haven't any trade or profession. You know that.

CHARLIE. Can't you think up one, something easy?

WARD. I might, yes. But I know how they treat prisoners. Solitary confinement, bread and water.

CHARLIE. Nothing like it. Jails have progressed like everything else. Why, with money and influence, life in prison now is a cinch. You can have the best of food if you pay for it, anything you want to read, play cards or any other game you choose. They have their own ball clubs. They have shows, moving pictures, everything for the comfort and amusement of the prisoners.

WARD. It's a wonder they have any rooms left.

CHARLIE. Of course some jails are more expensive than others.

WARD. Naturally—the neighborhood. The rents are higher.

CHARLIE. Take Ludlow Street Jail. They tell me it's better and more pleasant than home. And the jail in Atlanta. Ah, that's a jail. That's very exclusive. You have got to have an awful pull to get into Atlanta. Why, Bill, it's like a big social club.

WARD. You don't suppose they would blackball me down there?

CHARLIE. No. You would have a wonderful time. The members go in and out whenever they please. Oh, with a guard, of course. Why, I heard of a fellow who called at that prison to see a friend of his and the guard said he was sorry but he was out motoring.

WARD. Motoring?

CHARLIE. Yes. But he would probably be back for dinner.

WARD. Telephone down to Atlanta for a room and bath for me.

CHARLIE. (*Crosses c. of stage*) You mean you'll go through with it?

WARD. Yes. And I've just thought of the trade I'll tell them I've been working at. (*Crosses to CHARLIE.*)

CHARLIE. What's that?

WARD. I'm going to tell them I'm a travelling salesman.

CURTAIN

ACT II

TIME: *Five P.M. The same day.*

AT RISE: CHARLIE *enters L.C. He has a box under his arm containing pair of large shoes, rubber glove and glass-cutter. He unwraps box, deposits paper in waste-basket below his desk, but leaves box on desk.*

CHARLIE. (*Goes R. and calls*) Drake—Drake!

DRAKE. (*Entering R., with overcoat but no hat*)
Yes, Mr. B.

CHARLIE. Is Mr. Ward awake?

DRAKE. I don't know.

CHARLIE. You don't know?

DRAKE. I don't know if he's awake or asleep.
He hasn't been home. At least I haven't seen him.

CHARLIE. Do you remember what I told you to say to Dugan?

DRAKE. Yes.

CHARLIE. And after you've told him, hand him this. (*Offers envelope.*)

DRAKE. What is it? (*Takes envelope.*)

CHARLIE. The name of the thief. (*WARD enters with hat and coat from L.C.*) Hello, Bill. (*WARD crosses to R.C.*)

DRAKE. Is that a new hat?

WARD. Yes. See if it fits you.

DRAKE. I'll make it fit. (*Takes hat, crosses L., then up and exits L.C.*)

WARD. You know I haven't even had those shoes on yet? And I haven't been to bed since you saw me.

CHARLIE. What have you been doing?

WARD. I have been at the hospital with Frank. I tell you, Charlie, *I'm desperate.* (*Crosses up to windows, as if to go on balcony.*)

CHARLIE. No, you don't. None of that nonsense. Now you sit down and be sensible. Was the operation successful? Will he live?

WARD. (*Sits in chair R. of desk*) Yes—he'll live, but he'll be in there for months. It was terrible to see him all bandaged up!

CHARLIE. (*Crosses back of desk*) Poor devil. Was he in much pain?

WARD. I asked him that. He said the pains didn't worry him, and he closed his eyes to hide a tear. "My wife and little kiddies, what are they going to do?"

CHARLIE. Didn't you try to brace him up?

WARD. I didn't try—I did.—I said, "Frank, you just think of getting out of this hospital and getting well. I'll take care of your wife and family." And he said, "Do you mean that, Bill?" "So help me God, I do." Then he squeezed my hand with what little strength he had left and looked up at me with an expression I'll never forget, and said, "God bless you, old pal."

CHARLIE. That's fine, Bill!

WARD. Well, Charlie, I left that hospital feeling for the first time in my life that I had a duty to perform, and no matter what the consequences were, I was going through with it!

CHARLIE. Of course you will. (*Sits in chair back of desk.*)

WARD. Then I commenced to think of what I had to do to get the money. (*Crosses c.*)

CHARLIE. It's a great thing to do this for him, Bill.

WARD. I'm going to do it right.

CHARLIE. You haven't changed your mind?

WARD. (*Crosses L.*) No, sir!

CHARLIE. All right. Now I'll tell you what *I've* been doing all day.

WARD. What? (*Sits in chair R. of desk.*)

CHARLIE. Getting the clues. There's a glass-cutter and a rubber glove.

WARD. Why rubber glove?

CHARLIE. The left-handed rubber glove was found in the museum, so I had to get a right-handed one, and here are the shoes.

WARD. Shoes?

CHARLIE. Listen—— (*Reading*) "The night the painting disappeared, they had just completed a new concrete walk in the rear of the building. In the dark, the thief didn't notice the concrete wasn't dry, and in getting away, left the imprint of his shoe in the fresh cement."

WARD. Well?

CHARLIE. Here. (*Gives him shoes.*)

WARD. Where are the cars that go with these?

CHARLIE. Put them on.

WARD. Why?

CHARLIE. Put them on. If Dugan saw you wearing your own shoes, he'd know these weren't yours. (*Hides glove and glass-cutter up behind clock.*)

WARD. I don't think I'm going to be able to walk in these. (*Puts on one big shoe, then the second.*)

CHARLIE. You'll have to learn.

WARD. It's rather late to learn to walk, isn't it? What do you suppose a man thinks of who has a foot this size? (*Crosses to R.*) First time I ever tried to ski. (*Crosses back c.*)

CHARLIE. Have you got your list of crook words?

WARD. Yes.

CHARLIE. Get it out. We've got a lot more for

you. Here's one—"a stretch"— (*Sits in chair back of desk and reads from a book.*)

WARD. What does it mean?

CHARLIE. It means a prison term—crooks never say, "I served ten years."

WARD. (c.) No?

CHARLIE. No. They call it a stretch. Give me your list—I'll write that in. (*WARD gives CHARLIE list and he writes and gives it back to WARD.*)

WARD. I must remember that—a stretch.

CHARLIE. (*Back of desk*) And here's another good one—konk.

WARD. What does it mean?

CHARLIE. It's slang for head. (*Points to head.*)

WARD. Konk! (*CHARLIE writes on paper.*) Konk—head—I must remember that.

CHARLIE. You must remember them all. And when Dugan, the detective, questions you—every now and then slip in one of those crook terms—sure you do remember them?

WARD. I ought to. I studied them for three hours. (*Shows paper.*)

CHARLIE. Good! Come on, I'll try you. (*Looks at book.*) Knicked. (*Bus. looks at paper.*)

WARD. You're not starting from the top—where you wrote it.

CHARLIE. You're not going to say them in order, you know. (*Bus. of looking at paper.*) Don't read it.

WARD. I'm not reading it—I'm trying to find it. (*Bus. of looking at paper.*) Knicked—stole.

CHARLIE. Right. Now—gat.

WARD. Gat? You mean got—

CHARLIE. No—gat.

WARD. You can't say "I gat me hat."

CHARLIE. No—it's slang!

WARD. What does it mean?

CHARLIE. Gun!

WARD. That's right—gun.

CHARLIE. Now, speil.

WARD. Speil—talk.

CHARLIE. Fine. Now—konk.

WARD. Stretch——

CHARLIE. No!

WARD. That's a new one.

CHARLIE. Konk means head.

WARD. That's right. Head.

CHARLIE. Now—bull.

WARD. That's easy—detective.

CHARLIE. Good. Now, then—stretch.

WARD. Ten years.

CHARLIE. No—not ten years—if you've served a term in jail you've "done a stretch."

WARD. Listen, now—that is all new to me and I can't learn it in a second. Crooks have to have time to learn all this. You can't expect me to know it right off. You don't expect a little baby to say, "Mama, I got a konk ache." Give me time.

CHARLIE. Now, study those words, and by using them judiciously you'll make Dugan suspicious, because when he starts to give you the third degree you must talk as though you were innocent, but act guilty.

WARD. I must what?

CHARLIE. Talk as though you were innocent, but act guilty.

WARD. I must deny everything and swear I did not steal the picture, but convince him I did?

CHARLIE. That's it—you've got to act a little.

WARD. Act a *little*? John Barrymore couldn't do that. (*As if speaking to detective, c.*) How dare you accuse me of this crime? Do you realize you are accusing a Ward of being a thief? A man of my position and standing in society—a welcome guest at the most exclusive homes in New York? How dare you! (*Bus. of stamping foot.*)

CHARLIE. Great!

WARD. Wait—I'm not through with him yet. How dare you! I want to speil a little more with you. The whole thing is absurd. And you or any other bull who says I knicked that smear lies—but I did take it just the same. Now we couldn't get away with that.

CHARLIE. (*Disgusted*) No—no—you won't have to tell him you stole it. (*Points to paper in WARD's hand*) Do you remember your alibi?

WARD. Yes.

CHARLIE. You know, Dugan won't mince matters—and the first question he'll ask is—where were you—

WARD. I know—where were you on the night of September the 9th? (*Looks at paper and mugs.*)

CHARLIE. Well—where were you? Have you forgotten your first answer?

WARD. It says here—(*Showing paper*)—not to answer the first time—just to look indignant—then show a little fear.

CHARLIE. Yes, and is that your idea of it? (*Indicating WARD's grimacing.*)

WARD. What's wrong about it?

CHARLIE. Wrong? If you start making faces at Dugan, he'll take you to an asylum. You must look something like this— (*Makes grimace, which WARD imitates.*) That's a little better.

WARD. He'll take you somewhere, too.

CHARLIE. Now, where were you on the night of September ninth?

(*WARN Buzzer.*)

WARD. In Russia—er—the Russian Theatre.

CHARLIE. No.

WARD. No. The Russian Players.

CHARLIE. Right.

WARD. Well, you have three guesses at everything, haven't you?

CHARLIE. Right. You must keep your wits about you or you'll mess this thing all up.

WARD. I'll do my best—but I'm terrible nervous. (*Rehearses hang-dog expression.*) You know, I've got a very honest face and it's going to be hard to look like a crook. Another thing, if I keep on trying I may forget and look like one when I'm talking to some friend or Florence. It would be a fine thing if I said, "Hello, Flo," and forgot and looked like this. (*Grimaces.*)

(*DOOR Slam Off L.*)

(*Enter DRAKE up L.C. Crosses to R.C.*)

CHARLIE. Did you see Dugan?

DRAKE. (*Between CHARLIE and BILL*) Yes, Mr. B., I seen Dugan.

CHARLIE. What did you tell him?

DRAKE. Just what I was told. (*Acts as if speaking to DUGAN.*) When I got in his office he says to me, "Well, what's on your mind?" And I says, "Are you Mr. Dugan?" Then he says, "Yes." "Well," says I, "how would you like a little inside info on the smear that was lifted from the Museum?" In a jiffy he was on his toes. "What do yer know?" he says. "I know enough to get me fifty thousand smackers!" (*WARD shows he's at a loss.*) "Well, spill it," says he. "I will when I'm sure I'll get the reward." "Can't you trust me?" says Dugan. "That's what's kept me broke, trusting guys." He got awful sore at that crack—and said, "What do you want me to do?" And I says, "Sign a paper which gives me the reward." And Dugan says, "I'll sign a paper if you put me wise to the right man." So he dopes out this and signs it—with a witness to him signing it. (*Hands paper to CHARLIE.*) Then I hands him the envelope with the name in it! And he takes it and says, "If I find you're trying to

double-cross me and this info's a phoney to stage a getaway, I'll slough you over the mush and then railroad you for a stretch." (*All through this speech WARD has been trying to follow him on his paper of slang words, showing he doesn't understand.*)

WARD. (*Looking at list*) Say, there isn't a damn one of those on here!

DRAKE. Is the paper O.K.?

CHARLIE. (*Handing him paper*) Yes. (*DRAKE crosses R. to door. To WARD*) You've told Drake what to do with the money?

WARD. While I'm away he's to go and call on Mr. Clayton every day and see that he and his family have everything they need.

DRAKE. Won't I be livin' with you, Mr. W.?

WARD. No. That's one thing I'm going to get out of this.

DRAKE. Why, where are you goin', Mr. W.?

WARD. I'm going to try to make Atlanta—if the waiting-list isn't too long.

DRAKE. What do you mean? (*Suddenly afraid.*) Say, what was that name I give to Dugan?

WARD. It was mine!

DRAKE. No! Oh, my God, Mr. W.! Why did you make me do a thing like that? (*CHARLIE is trying to stop him. WARD rushes up L.; closes the windows R.C.*) Say you was a crook! Why, I'd just as soon call me own mother a thief! Oh, why did I do it? All right, throw me out that window!

WARD. (*Crosses down R., L. of DRAKE*) If I threw you out the window you'd bounce back!

DRAKE. Oh, Mr. W., you're no thief!

CHARLIE. Drake, someone will hear you! (*Rushes up L.U. and looks out door. Crosses down L.*)

DRAKE. (R.) I don't care who hears me—I'll tell the world you're on the up and up and I'd die for you!

WARD. (R.C.) And here's where you do—if you

don't shut up. Now, listen. Ever since you've been with me you've done nothing but tell everybody how much you liked me—that you loved me like a brother—and you'd work for me for nothing.

DRAKE. Well, haven't I?

WARD. Haven't you what?

DRAKE. Worked for nothing?

WARD. No. I owe you some money, but——

DRAKE. If you got to have money, you kin use what you owe me.

WARD. I used it before I owed it to you—I'm broke—flat—and I've got a chance to get fifty thousand dollars—and I can only get it with your help—when Dugan questions you, if you make one mistake, I'll lose it and we may both go to jail—do you understand?

DRAKE. Yes, Mr. W. But I'd think it was an honor to do a stretch with you.

WARD. Well, I wouldn't. You don't want people to point at me and say, "There's the man who was the cause of sending his pal to the hospital and left his wife and children to starve"—do you?

DRAKE. (*Sniveling*) No, Mr. W. (*Then in anger*) And if I heard anyone say it—I'd bump him off.

WARD. Bump him off? What's that mean?

DRAKE. That's slang for croaking a mug.

WARD. (*Taking out paper and writing on it*) I don't know yet what it means.—Now, Drake, will you keep still—and help me?

DRAKE. I'll do anything you say. You know I will. But to call you a crook—— Oh, Mr. W.—
(BUZZER.)

WARD. Now, don't start again. Get in there.

(DRAKE exits R.I. Buzzcr. WARD and CHARLIE exchange looks. CHARLIE puts package under desk.)

CHARLIE. I think it's Dugan.

WARD. Tell him I'm out. (*Crosses R.*)

CHARLIE. You can't do that. (*Crosses R., after WARD; pushes him towards door L.C.*) Go and open that door, and stop shaking and look as if you were guilty.

WARD. I'll look guilty—but I don't think I can stop shaking. (*CHARLIE exits L.2. Buzzer.*) Come in! (*Very nervous and frightened; bus. goes to door upper L.C., opens it, and assuming a tough manner*) What do yer want? (*FLORENCE and LEILA appear in doorway.*)

FLORENCE. Why, what's the matter, Bill? (*Enter FLORENCE and LEILA. Cross R., taking off furs and hats.*)

WARD. (*Crosses c.*) I thought it was the bull. I mean Drake.

LEILA. Well, I've had a man's sized job losing my little playmate William. (*Crosses R. Sits on arm of big chair. FLORENCE crosses R. to big chair and sits. WILLIAM appears, looks surprised at WARD's expression, then looks at LEILA and smiles. Working herself into a state of annoyance and anger toward WILLIAM.*) Why did you come here? You weren't invited! (*WILLIAM indicates by gesture he came because she was here. Is about to speak.*)

WARD. Oh, I don't mind.

LEILA. Oh, of course I know you're not going to throw him out.

WARD. Sit down—— (*WILLIAM starts to sit.*) Not on your hat—down here. (*WILLIAM comes down and sits in chair L.C.*)

LEILA. Now, for the last time I tell you I will not be followed every minute as if I were a child. I'm beginning to realize the only way to get rid of you is to marry you. (*WILLIAM beams at this, rises from chair, starts to her.*) Oh, sit down—I'm not going to do it. (*WILLIAM sits dejectedly.*)

WARD. Leila, does Toto smoke? (*Offers cigarette-box to WILLIAM.*) Smoke? (*WILLIAM has cigarette-case in his hand and he shows it to WARD.*) Prefer your own? Very well. (*WARD strikes a match, offers lighted match to WILLIAM. WILLIAM by this time has own match-box in his hand, which he shows to WARD, strikes and lights his cigarette.*) Have a drink? (*WILLIAM smiles, produces flask from pocket. To FLORENCE*) He uses everything of his own but his voice. (*JOHN enters upper door L. Starts to door L., stops, looks at WILLIAM, whose back is toward him, then at LEILA, who in pantomime indicates to him she would like to be rid of WILLIAM. JOHN smiles knowingly, bows and exits door L.I. Quickly*) I suppose, like myself, you're all dying for some tea. (*To WILLIAM*) How about you? (*WILLIAM feels in coat pocket for cigarette-case.*) You didn't bring your own tea? (*Phone rings. WILLIAM starts up. WARD stops him.*) I'll attend to it. (*Looks at WILLIAM.*) You know, this must be answered—it's not a radio. (*In phone*) Hello—yes, Mr. Noyes is here. (*Pause. LEILA shows she understands the phone call. Walks right and gets WILLIAM'S hat and cane.*) At his house immediately? Very well. (*Hangs up receiver.*) You're wanted at your house immediately.

LEILA. (*Walking quickly to WILLIAM, speaking as she walks*) Isn't that too bad? (*Hands WILLIAM his hat and cane and walks him up stage to door L.C., which she opens and almost shoves him out.*) I hope it's nothing serious. (*WILLIAM looks surprised, is about to ask to be excused.*) You must go—they just phoned for you—it's important! (*WILLIAM nods, puts on hat, exits upper door L.C. LEILA closes door, crosses to FLO, U.C.*)

FLORENCE. Don't. Leila: Willie is a bit stupid. I know, but he's terribly fond of you and you really don't treat him right.

WARD. How can you treat him—he brings everything with him.

(Enter JOHN with tea wagon, tea service, cakes, small sandwiches, etc. JOHN places tea wagon over R.)

JOHN. (*Looking service over, checking up*) Now, let me see what I've forgot.

WARD. How can you see what you've forgotten?

JOHN. That's a good one—how can I see what I've forgot! (*Laughs.*)

WARD. (*Placing chair*) Now, Flo, over here, please.

FLORENCE. All rightie. (*WARD pours tea, FLORENCE holds cup; WARD'S hand shakes; he can hardly pour.*)

WARD. You'll have to hold your cup still. (*WARD has poured cup of tea for FLO.*) Cream?

LEILA. (*Shakes head*) No.

JOHN. (*Placing chair L. of tea wagon*) Permit me!

LEILA. (*All smiles, sits*) Thank you, John.

JOHN. (*Meaning chair, to LEILA*) Is that comfortable?

LEILA. Yes—but I was thanking you for the clever way you got rid of the——

WARD. (*Holding up slice of lemon in tongs*) Lemon?

LEILA. (*Meaning WILLIAM*) Yes, that's right—lemon.

FLORENCE. (*To WARD*) If you please. (*He serves her with lemon.*)

WARD. (*Sugar tongs*) How many?

FLORENCE. (*About to say one*) Just——

LEILA. No.

JOHN. May I do that for you?

WARD. If you don't mind—it's more in your line.

(As JOHN pours tea for LEILA, she shows plainly she is in love with him, follows his every move approvingly.)

LEILA. You did that beautifully, Rudolph.

WARD. Yes—right in the cup.

JOHN. (To LEILA) Cream?

FLORENCE. No cream for Miss Leila—and no sugar. I'm not going to suffer alone.

JOHN. Lemon?

LEILA. Yes, if you please. (JOHN serves LEILA with lemon.)

JOHN. Tea, sir?

WARD. Just a small one. (JOHN pours tea in WARD's cup.) When!

LEILA. Bill, you're not crazy about tea.

WARD. (Picking up fringed napkin) Well, I've never had to take bromo seltzer from the effects of it. And, John, have them sew these napkins up! (Holds up a fringed napkin.)

JOHN. (Picks up dish of cake from tea wagon) Cake?

(FLO and LEILA both reach quickly for cake, look at each other and almost say sadly)

FLORENCE. No, thanks.} (Spoken together

LEILA. No, thanks.} very sadly.)

WARD. Well, don't cry about it. (Holding out plate of very thin sandwiches.) Sandwich?

FLORENCE. Yes, Bill, please. (As if she would take the whole pile of sandwiches.)

LEILA. Only one, Florence.

WARD. She's only measuring them. These are very thin.

LEILA. Thanks. They look delicious.

JOHN. Sandwich, sir? (Bus. WARD hands

FLORENCE *two pieces of cake, which she tries to eat, unseen by LEILA.*)

WARD. (*Looking at his sandwich*) Oh, look—someone put something in mine.

LEILA. (*Looking up stage, R.*) What a lovely view you have, Bill—— (*WARD and FLORENCE look up stage while LEILA sneaks two or three pieces of sugar for her tea. FLORENCE also at this time, while her back is turned to LEILA, tries to eat cake.*)

FLORENCE. (*Can hardly speak, though she tries to*) Yes—it's lovely—beautiful.

WARD. Take a drink—you're choking.

FLORENCE. Oh, Bill, remember, you were to tell me something.

WARD. What?

FLORENCE. The scheme you had for making all that money.

WARD. (*Suddenly remembering*) Oh, that. Oh, that's a secret.

LEILA. But you promised to tell her.

WARD. To tell *her*, yes. But I didn't say I'd tell the whole world.

FLORENCE. (*Rises, crosses up R.*) No, a promise is a promise. (*Looks toward balcony.*)

LEILA. If you wish to be alone, why not step out on the balcony?

FLORENCE. I was just going to suggest that.

LEILA. My, Bill—but you're slow. My sweet-heart wouldn't have to hint to me more than once how much more wonderful it is, being alone.

WARD. Well, maybe I'm not so forward. (*Steals plate of sandwiches and exits through window R.C. with FLORENCE.*)

JOHN. At last!

LEILA. (*Pulls down shades*) Ssh!

JOHN. I thought they would never give me an opportunity to be alone with you!

LEILA. John! (*Goes to him.*)

JOHN. My darling! (*Embraces her.*) You received my answer to your note?

LEILA. Yes, sweetheart, it made me very happy.

JOHN. If it made you half as happy as yours made me, I'm content. And, Leila, when you told me over the phone you were willing to——

LEILA. (*Places finger over his lips*) Hush.

JOHN. You are not ashamed of your love for me?

LEILA. Ashamed? I'm proud of it, John.

JOHN. (*Starts to embrace her*) My darling! (*CHARLIE enters from room L.2. JOHN and LEILA start either side. JOHN slightly embarrassed.*) Anything you wish, sir?

CHARLIE. (*Severely*) Yes. I wish you to remain in my room.

JOHN. (*Politely*) Yes, sir. (*Exits room L.2.*)

CHARLIE. (*Change of tone, to LEILA, who is now U.R., back to audience*) Where is Bill and Florence? (*LEILA turns to him, smiles, and beckons him to come over, which he does. LEILA opens door, disclosing BILL and FLORENCE on balcony in close embrace; both laugh, which startles WARD and FLORENCE. They both enter room, very much annoyed and hair dishevelled. CHARLIE and LEILA cross L. and L.C.*)

FLORENCE. I think that's horrid, Leila. We didn't disturb you.

WARD. (*Down R.*) It's dangerous, too—fifteen stories. (*To FLORENCE*) Fix your hair.

FLORENCE. Fix your own. (*All four look at each other and, realizing the situation, burst out laughing. WARD starting to smooth out his hair.*) What are you laughing at?

LEILA. You ought to see your hair.

FLORENCE. (*Crosses to mirror L.*) What's the matter with my hair? Well, it's so breezy out there. (*Fixes hair.*)

LEILA. (*Getting hat and crosses to mirror L.*)
Well, so long, everybody——

FLORENCE. Can't you wait for me?

WARD. (*Crosses L. and hands her her coat*) No, she can't. Have you got to go? That's too bad!

LEILA. (*At door C.*) Well, bye-bye, everybody—
enjoyed your tea. (*Exits L.C.*)

FLORENCE. (*Putting on hat at mirror L.*) I want to thank you too, Charlie.

CHARLIE. Thank me? For what? (*L.C.*)

FLORENCE. For helping Bill make all that money.

CHARLIE. Oh, that's all right, Florence. I didn't think Bill had the nerve to do it.

WARD. (*R.C.*) Oh, it didn't require much nerve. I just out-guessed those fellows, that's all. I just bought the stocks at the right time.

CHARLIE. Stocks?

FLORENCE. Yes.

CHARLIE. What stocks?

FLORENCE. Steel.

WARD. You'll pardon me, Charlie, won't you, please?

CHARLIE. Certainly. (*Exits L.2.*)

WARD. Now, Florence, if you heard something about me, would you believe it?

FLORENCE. (*Surprised, looking at him*) What do you mean?

WARD. That I was a crook—knicked something—a criminal——

FLORENCE. (*Laughs*) Of course I wouldn't believe it. What nonsense!

WARD. You wouldn't—honestly? And you'd come to me and let me tell you about it?

FLORENCE. No, because I know you'd come to me and tell me about it!

WARD. But suppose I couldn't get out.

(*WARN Phone.*)

FLORENCE. Then I'd come to you—no matter

where you were, and say "Bill, I don't believe it."
(*Turns away, then back.*) What made you ask me that? It wasn't anything about your scheme for making money, was it?

WARD. Well, you see, Florence—getting money—I mean, getting it quickly——

(*JOHN enters as door L.C. opens.*)

JOHN. May I take the things away, Mr. Ward?

WARD. Yes—take them away. (*Telephone rings.*)
Excuse me. (*Exits L.C., JOHN with tea table. Into phone*) Hello—yes? Yes—— (*Offers receiver to FLORENCE.*) It's for you.

(*PHONE.*)

FLORENCE. (*Taking it*) For me? (*In phone*)
Hello—no, James, not since lunch—— When? I can be there in ten minutes. Good-bye. (*Hangs up phone.*)

WARD. (*c. of desk*) Anything wrong?

FLORENCE. No. Father telephoned to the house. He's on his way home now—I thought he was going to be at the Museum all the afternoon.

WARD. The Metropolitan Museum?

FLORENCE. Yes, at some meeting—about their old Lombardi painting.

WARD. Lombardi—that's the picture that was s-sto-stolen—isn't it?

FLORENCE. Yes. Father thought the world of that picture.

WARD. He did, eh?

FLORENCE. And about two years ago he loaned it to the Museum.

WARD. (*Crosses R.*) Your father owned that picture?

FLORENCE. (*Notices WARD's expression*) Yes—what's the matter?

WARD. I was just thinking of something——

FLORENCE. And father's been about crazy ever since—engaging a great detective and offering rewards and doing everything he could think of—
(*Rises, crosses U.L.*)

(CHARLIE *enters U.L.*)

CHARLIE. (L.) Say, Bill, have you forgotten your engagement?

WARD. (R.) No. I was just thinking about it.

FLORENCE. (C.) Oh, I must run.

CHARLIE. I didn't mean to drive you away.

FLORENCE. Oh, I've got to go. (*To WARD*) Do you expect to be in this evening?

WARD. I'll be in—by this evening.

FLORENCE. (*Crosses to L.C. door*) Call me up, if you get time.

WARD. Oh, I'll get time, all right. (FLORENCE *exits L.C.*) Give my love to your father! (*Crosses R. nervously.*)

CHARLIE. What's the matter—getting scared?

WARD. That picture belongs to her father—that's all.

CHARLIE. No! That's awful, Bill.

WARD. (*Pacing up and down, going R.*) The whole thing is awful!

CHARLIE. And I'm afraid it's too late to back out now. (L.)

WARD. I don't want to back out. I tell you, Frank Clayton's got to have that money! (*Crosses L. to door L.I.*)

(DUGAN, a typical New York detective, *enters.*

WARD *crosses R. to CHARLIE, knowing this man is someone to avoid, throws his arms about CHARLIE for protection, at the same time looking L. at DUGAN.*)

DUGAN. My name's Dugan. Oh, Meehan! (MEEHAN *enters* L.C.) There's a servant's elevator with two ways to get off—one for guests and one for servants—put a man at each one.

MEEHAN. Yes, chief. (*Exits* L.C.)

DUGAN. Is either one of you named William Ward?

CHARLIE. This is Mr. Ward.

DUGAN. (*To* CHARLIE) I want to talk to this bird alone.

CHARLIE. Yes, sir. (WARD *whispers to him.*)

WARD. I forget the first answer!

CHARLIE. (*Whispers*) To see the Russian——

DUGAN. Stop whispering and get out of here.

WARD. Yes, sir. (*Starts quickly* R.)

DUGAN. Not you! (WARD *halts.* *To* CHARLIE) Him! (*As* CHARLIE *gets to door* L., DUGAN *frisks* WARD *quite roughly.*)

WARD. (*Frightened, yells*) Charlie! (CHARLIE *turns.*) He kicked me! (CHARLIE *is about to speak.*)

DUGAN. Get out! (CHARLIE *exits door* L.2.) Sit down! (WARD *sits.* DUGAN *walks slowly down to table* L. WARD *is* L.C. *Sits.* DUGAN's *silence is making* WARD *terribly nervous; he coughs, which startles* WARD, *bus.* DUGAN *looks at and smells decanter, walks down c. of table, leans over same and speaks gruffly*) Why were you—— (*Pointing to door of hallway through which* WARD *was about to exit.*)

WARD. (*Quickly and in nervous manner*) Russian Players. (*Sneaks paper from pocket, tries to read it.*)

DUGAN. Russian Players? What Russian Players?

WARD. Morris's.

DUGAN. Morris's what?

WARD. Morris's guests. I was Morris's guest. He invited—an invitation to——

DUGAN. What are you talking about?

WARD. You gave me the wrong question.

DUGAN. (*Threatening tone*) Are you trying to kid me?

WARD. No, sir.

DUGAN. Well, don't. Nobody can kid Dugan. Now, why were you leaving by the servants' elevator?

WARD. I didn't want to meet him.

DUGAN. Him who?

WARD. (*Terribly nervous*) Him—you!

DUGAN. Me?

WARD. Yes, ma'am—yes, sir.

DUGAN. Why didn't you want to see me?

WARD. Well, would you want to meet a—(*Looks at paper*)—a bull?

DUGAN. Not if I done something crooked. Not if I had——

WARD. Knicked something?

DUGAN. Yes, knicked something. Something worth a whole lot of money—something that if they proved I'd done I might——

WARD. (*Trying to act wise*) Have to stretch yourself?

DUGAN. Yes, that's the word—stretch. Of course, if I was on the square—I wouldn't care who I met, but, if I—(*Moving nearer to WARD and speaking very coldly and deliberately*)—if I had stolen something—(*WARD is getting more nervous every minute*)—so important that every bull in the United States would give his arm—(*Puts arm out toward WARD, who wilts in chair*)—his right arm—to get—I'd de damn careful not to run into Dugan! (*Bangs his hand sharply on desk, which brings WARD to his feet.*) Sit down! (*WARD flops back into chair, mops his face with handkerchief.*)

WARD. I'd like to ask——

DUGAN. You ask nothing. I'll do all the asking.

WARD. (*Clearing his throat*) Well, go ahead.
(*Looks tough.*) Spoil!

DUGAN. What?

WARD. (*Consulting paper in hand, unseen by DUGAN*) I mean speil! (*Trying to look wise.*)
That means talk.

DUGAN. I know what it means! Where were you—— (*The rest of this speech DUGAN and WARD say together.*)

DUGAN. On the night of September the ninth? }
WARD. On the night of September the ninth? That's right! } (*Together.*)

DUGAN. What's right?

WARD. The question. That's the right question!

DUGAN. Ward, have you been drinking?

WARD. No. But I don't think I can hold out much longer.

DUGAN. Well, you speak as if you'd been drinking. Now, you answer my question—and don't stall any more. (*Becoming angry.*) Where were you—

WARD. On the night of September ninth—I went to the theatre to see the Russian Players. I don't remember the name of the play, but it ended with an itch.

DUGAN. Never mind the name of the play. When did you leave the theatre?

WARD. As soon as I woke up—about the middle of the second act.

DUGAN. Where did you go then?

WARD. I went out.

DUGAN. Out where?

WARD. Out of the theatre.

DUGAN. Then where did you go?

WARD. I went in.

DUGAN. In the theatre?

WARD. No—in a cafe.

DUGAN. How long did you stay in the cafe?

WARD. I don't know.

DUGAN. You don't know?

WARD. No.

DUGAN. Why don't you know?

WARD. Well, I was drinking and——

DUGAN. That's enough—I'm on. The alibi is "I was drunk"—— (*Laughs.*)

WARD. No, the alibi is *I was drunk!* (*Assuming an indignant air.*) And what do you mean by alibi? Alibi for what? Why all these questions? You're treating me as if I were a thief! (*Gaining confidence as he sees DUGAN is silent.*) Am I suspected of some crime? How dare you! (*Sits.*)

DUGAN. Now, you are suspected of committing a crime!

WARD. What crime? (*Assumes indignant air.*)

DUGAN. Stealing the Lombardi.

WARD. I don't know anything about Lumbago.

DUGAN. Lombardi.

WARD. Do you think for a minute——

DUGAN. I don't think for a minute! I think all the time!

WARD. I got that joke, but I can't laugh.

DUGAN. Now, if you stall with me—I'll make it as hard for you as I can. If you wise me up, I'll make it as easy as I can.

WARD. Do you know you are accusing William Ward?

DUGAN. Sure.

WARD. You know my position?

DUGAN. Sure.

WARD. What object would I have stealing a Baccardi?

DUGAN. The same object anybody has—money! (*Speaking deliberately and looking at BILL intently*) Money to pay for your thousand dollar parties—money to pay servants—money to keep up this ex-

pensive apartment—money for hospital expenses—you're living like a millionaire, and you haven't any business or any income. (*Angrily*) Do you know a man named Drake?

WARD. Yes.

DUGAN. Know him long?

WARD. Yes, for years.

DUGAN. Ever had any trouble with him?

WARD. Every day.

DUGAN. (*Puzzled*) Every day? You don't see him every day, do you?

WARD. Yes.

DUGAN. (*Shaking head*) Where do you see him every day?

WARD. Here.

DUGAN. Does he call here every day?

WARD. No.

DUGAN. Then how do you see him every day?

WARD. He works here.

DUGAN. Works here? Why didn't you say so?

WARD. You're a detective—why didn't you find out?

DUGAN. He works here? What does he do?

WARD. Nothing.

DUGAN. Nothing?

WARD. Nothing, right. Drake's my valet.

DUGAN. Your valet? I see. (*Blows whistle, noise brings MEEHAN in doorway of upper door L.C.*)

MEEHAN. Anything wrong, chief?

DUGAN. No one is to leave this apartment.

(*CHARLIE enters U.L. Goes down L.*)

CHARLIE. Would you mind telling me what you men are doing here? (*Looks from one detective to another.*)

DUGAN. I was tipped off that the crook who got

away with the Lombardi from the Museum is in this hotel. (*Looks at WARD.*)

CHARLIE. (*Indignantly*) That doesn't explain your being in *our* apartment! (*Nodding to WARD.*)

DUGAN. I'm not here to explain anything. I'm here to have things explained to me. I'm in charge of this apartment until I get the *crook*. (*Looks at WARD.*)

CHARLIE. But surely you don't suspect Mr. Ward.

(*JOHN enters U.L. Stops in surprise. DUGAN goes to him.*)

DUGAN. (*Crosses U., to JOHN*) Well, what do you want?

JOHN. I work here.

DUGAN. Do you belong in this apartment?

JOHN. Yes.

CHARLIE. He is my valet.

DUGAN. Oh, all the boys have valets—I don't need you two just now. (*Crosses R.*)

MEEHAN. In there! (*CHARLIE and JOHN exit L.2.*)

DUGAN. (*To WARD*) Not you! (*WARD grimaces.*) What are you laughing at?

WARD. I'm not laughing!

DUGAN. Take him in there, Meehan. (*Indicating D.R.*)

MEEHAN. (*Pulling him along*) Come, now, get a gait on! (*Pushes WARD off R.D. as WARD tries to dodge going into room.*)

DUGAN. (*To MEEHAN*) Now get his pal here!

MEEHAN. (*Calls*) Mr. Burnham!

CHARLIE. (*Off L.*) Yes——

MEEHAN. This way, please.

CHARLIE. (*Entering from room L., goes down L.*) Well?

DUGAN. (*Back of desk*) How long have you known Ward?

CHARLIE. About a year.

DUGAN. Where did you meet him?

CHARLIE. On my way home from London.

DUGAN. (*Exchanges glances with MEEHAN*) From London. I see. You two pretty good friends?

CHARLIE. He loaned me five thousand dollars the first day we met. (*During rest of this scene DUGAN is lying to trap CHARLIE. CHARLIE knows this and lies also; pretends to be angry and indignant.*) I didn't ask him for the money—in fact, he insisted on my taking it.

DUGAN. Loaned you five thousand!

CHARLIE. Yes. I had lost a lot of money on the boat—gambling. (*DUGAN looks at MEEHAN, then back to CHARLIE.*) Oh, he had excellent security.

DUGAN. What bank was the check drawn on?

CHARLIE. No bank. It was in cash.

DUGAN. Did it strike you five thousand was a lot of money to carry around?

CHARLIE. Well, yes. And I told Bill so, but he just laughed and told me he had over a hundred thousand in cash——

DUGAN. Did he give any particular reason for having that much cash in his pockets?

CHARLIE. It was in the ship's safe. He said he didn't always carry that much cash——

DUGAN. (*Sarcastically*) Just every now and then. Whenever he took a job at moving pictures.

CHARLIE. Moving pictures?

MEEHAN. *Removing* pictures.

DUGAN. Why did he have so much cash with him?

CHARLIE. He had intended to send most of it over here and was going to buy a new Rolls Royce, but——

DUGAN. Something happened which made him

leave London *much sooner* than he had planned.

CHARLIE. (*Feigning surprise*) Yes, did he tell you?

DUGAN. No, he's too smart. I guessed it. (*Laughs.*)

CHARLIE. How did you guess exactly what he told me?

DUGAN. Just about a year ago there was a very valuable painting stolen in Paris and sold in London—stolen by the cleverest and most desperate crook in the world. He's never been caught—Scotland Yard traced him and was just about to nab him when he got away, as he always has, until now. This time he won't get away—not from Dugan.

CHARLIE. What has all that to do with Mr. Ward?

DUGAN. The same crook did both jobs, because they were done in the same identical way. And it's a cinch I've got the goods on your *very good friend!*

CHARLIE. (*Pretending indignation*) It's ridiculous to accuse Bill Ward. And he is my *very good friend!*

DUGAN. (*Sarcastically*) Well, if he's your very good friend, I'm a rotten detective. (*Swelling up.*)

CHARLIE. What makes you say he isn't?

DUGAN. Why, he as much as told me you took the Lombardi.

CHARLIE. *What?*

DUGAN. (*This is just what DUGAN wanted to happen*) Said you were with him the night of September the ninth.

CHARLIE. (*This is just what CHARLIE wanted*) Well, I was.

DUGAN. All night?

CHARLIE. Well, it was around three when we left the cafe.

DUGAN. What were you doing in the cafe?

CHARLIE. Well, one doesn't go to a cafe to have his hair cut!

MEEHAN. No—just trimmed.

DUGAN. He said he was too drunk to remember anything—but coming home—was he drunk?

CHARLIE. He'd been drinking, yes—and we did come here and went to bed.

DUGAN. He swears *he* went to bed.

MEEHAN. (*Taking his cue from DUGAN*) And you went out.

CHARLIE. If he said that he's crazy.

DUGAN. He said you didn't get home until seven in the morning.

CHARLIE. (*Pretending to be very angry*) If he said *that*, he *lies*!

DUGAN. *If* he said it!

MEEHAN. He swears to it!

DUGAN. And that you acted queer and nervous, and had a guilty look.

CHARLIE. He'd better be careful, or I—— (*Stops himself.*)

(*WARN Buzzer.*)

DUGAN. (*Quickly*) Or you'll what? (*CHARLIE is silent.*) Or you'll *what*? Answer me—what do you know about him that you won't tell?

CHARLIE. I don't know anything.

DUGAN. But you suspect a lot. (*CHARLIE is silent. Buzzer.*) That'll be all, Mr. Burnham—thank you—— (*MEEHAN shows CHARLIE off L.2.*) See who it is, Meehan.

(*MEEHAN goes to door upper L.C., opens it, FLORENCE enters quickly, very much excited, speaking as she enters.*)

FLORENCE. Bill! (*DUGAN nods, MEEHAN exits L.C. Looks about room.*) Where's Mr. Ward?

DUGAN. (*Crosses R.C.*) That's what I'd like to know. Do you think you could tell me?

FLORENCE. No. (*Crosses C.*)

DUGAN. Then suppose you tell me who you are.

FLORENCE. Are you Mr. Dugan, the detective?

DUGAN. Yes, ma'am—I'm Dugan. Does that surprise you?

FLORENCE. No. I rather thought you'd be like this.

DUGAN. (*Crosses to FLORENCE C.*) You've forgotten to tell me who you are.

FLORENCE. I'm engaged to marry Mr. Ward.

DUGAN. Is that so? Well, this is interesting. You are as classy a pair as I've met up with in some time.

FLORENCE. You think Mr. Ward was implicated in stealing the Lombardi painting!

DUGAN. I do, eh? You don't say. Now, who told you all that?

FLORENCE. My father.

DUGAN. Your father?

FLORENCE. Mr. Osborne.

DUGAN. (*Surprised*) Clifford Osborne? (*Takes off hat.*)

FLORENCE. Yes. (*Backs R. a few steps.*)

DUGAN. I beg your pardon, Miss Osborne, I'd no idea——

FLORENCE. When you spoke to my father about the Lombardi, did you know then that Mr. Ward and I were engaged?

DUGAN. No idea of it in the world. Why——

FLORENCE. I'd thought possibly this ridiculous charge against Mr. Ward might have been arranged to break the engagement——

DUGAN. Oh! (*Shakes head.*) You're quite wrong, Miss Osborne. (*Stalling.*) But I'm much afraid if your engagement isn't broken your marriage will be indefinitely postponed——

FLORENCE. (*Excitedly*) No! You don't mean——

DUGAN. Yes, I do mean it. If I pin this picture job on him——

FLORENCE. But you won't—you can't—
(*Speaks rapidly and more firmly*) He is not a thief
—and what would be his object?

DUGAN. Money.

FLORENCE. Mr. Ward doesn't need money now.

DUGAN. He needs it now more than ever.

FLORENCE. (*Proudly*) But he made a lot of
money today.

DUGAN. He did, eh? Did he say how he'd *made*
it?

FLORENCE. Steel.

DUGAN. (*Laughing quietly*) Steal is right!
(*Changing to a serious tone*) Now, listen, Miss Os-
borne, I don't want to hurt your feelings, but you're
just wasting your time talking to me about Ward.
His own valet squealed on him!

FLORENCE. Drake?

DUGAN. Yes, that's his name—Drake.

FLORENCE. I don't believe it—why should he?

DUGAN. The fifty thousand dollars' reward of-
fered by your father.

FLORENCE. But, Mr. Dugan, when you see Mr.
Ward you'll know—

DUGAN. I have seen him—and he told lies enough
to convict himself twice over. Unless he can account
for the time between three o'clock and seven in the
morning of September ninth, he—well, I'm sorry to
tell you there's no chance for him. (*Crosses down*
R.)

FLORENCE. (*Thinking*) And if he could account
for that time?

DUGAN. (*Shaking his head*) He can't, Miss Os-
borne.

FLORENCE. No—because he's too honorable to
tell.

DUGAN. Honorable—huh—he doesn't dare tell—
he was at the Museum.

FLORENCE. (*Crosses to DUGAN*) That's impossi-

ble, Mr. Dugan—because on the night of September the ninth he—he was—with me.

DUGAN. (*After a pause, slowly*) Until seven in the morning?

FLORENCE. Yes—or eight—or nine—or ten—if it would save the man I'm going to marry.

DUGAN. I don't care much for women, Miss Osborne, not as a general thing—but I got to admit that the way they'll stand by a crook if they care about him—— (*Crosses to L.C. door.*)

FLORENCE. (*Half in tears, turns and up to him*) Don't you dare call Mr. Ward a crook!

DUGAN. All right, I won't. And if you'll go home now and let me alone, I promise you that I won't arrest him or even let this story out until I've seen you and your father.

FLORENCE. You mean that—honestly?

DUGAN. Give you my word—— (*Opens door L.C. and MEEHAN enters. FLORENCE hesitates.*) But you must do your part—go home.

FLORENCE. I'm going. (*Turns at door up L.C.*) You're not as awful as I thought you were, Mr. Dugan.

DUGAN. Why, Lord bless you, I got a heart of gold! (*FLORENCE exits.*) Now, get Ward in here! (*MEEHAN crosses to D.R.*) And, Meehan—— (*MEEHAN stops and turns; DUGAN uses lower tone*) Have that guy Drake where he can hear.

MEEHAN. (*Opening door*) Yes, sir. (*Calls*) Come out here.

(*WARD enters. MEEHAN shoves WARD below arm-chair c.*)

DUGAN. Now, young fellow, I've been going over your case and I don't mind saying I've got a line on you.

WARD. Say, Dugan——

DUGAN. Shut up—don't you open your trap again without you're asked a question, and if I catch you in so much as one lie, you'll regret it for a long time. Did you or did you not take the Lombardi—

WARD. Yes.

DUGAN. Yes, what?

WARD. Yes, I did—I took the Lombardi. Say, listen, I've confessed—haven't I? What more do you want?

DUGAN. You know well what more. Where is it?

WARD. What?

DUGAN. You heard me—I want that picture—understand? And I'm going to have it. And if you don't put us on to where we can get it, you'll wish you'd never been born. Where is it, now?

WARD. I—I don't know.

DUGAN. You don't know?

WARD. No.

DUGAN. Get ready, Meehan. We'll see if we can refresh his memory. (*MEEHAN starts for his wrists. DRAKE rushes out of door D.R., throws MEEHAN R.*)

DRAKE. Let him alone or I'll fire you through that window.

DUGAN. (*Crosses R., to DRAKE*) Hello, what's this? You're the guy that squealed on him!

DRAKE. Yes, and I lied to you! He never stole the picture. He never stole nothing—

WARD. Drake! (*DUGAN pushes WARD over L.*)

DRAKE. No, you didn't, Mr. W., and you know you didn't—and I won't stand for it no more for all the rewards from this to the North Pole. (*Crosses L. to DUGAN.*)

WARD. Don't listen to him, Dugan. He's lying to you. Don't listen to him.

DUGAN. Wait a minute— (*Goes to DRAKE.*) Why did you tip me off to Mr. Ward and now say he's innocent, eh? Why?

WARD. Yes—why?

DRAKE. Because—because—I stole it myself.

WARD. (*Crosses to DRAKE*) You—— (*To DUGAN*) If I ever get my hands on you!

DUGAN. That's enough, Meehan, take him down to headquarters. (*MEEHAN starts out with DRAKE up L.C.*)

MEEHAN. Now you've got yourself in sour—next time you squeal on a guy find out what you're doing first! (*MEEHAN and DRAKE off up L.C. and close door.*)

WARD. Mr. Dugan—listen—Drake's saying all that to save me. You've got to believe this—I did steal the Lombardi!

DUGAN. No, you didn't—I knew that two minutes after I looked at you. It was all some damned fool gag to get the reward—but it all worked in with my plan—and you couldn't have done me a bigger favor if you'd tried.

WARD. I tell you I stole the Lombardi!

DUGAN. No, you didn't. Drake didn't—and listen, mug, you can get just as many corns wearing shoes five sizes too big for you as you can by wearing 'em too small! (*Exits up L.C.*)

(*FLORENCE enters.*)

WARD. Florence!

FLORENCE. (*Excitedly*) Bill, Bill!

WARD. What is it, Florence?

FLORENCE. Father says they phoned him you were suspected of stealing his painting—the Lombardi—you—you didn't, Bill. (*WARD doesn't answer.*) Bill, did you steal the Lombardi from the Museum?

WARD. Florence, I don't even know where the Museum is! (*Embrace.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

TIME: *Ten-thirty p. m. The same evening.*

AT RISE: CHARLIE *discovered pacing up stage, and then crossing R.* JOHN *at phone, speaking when curtain rises.*

JOHN. (*In phone*) Hello—Shirley—— You will be here in an hour—I'll have the package ready for you—— Understand? (*Hangs up phone, starts to door c., opens it.*)

(WARD *enters.* JOHN *exits L.C.*)

CHARLIE. Hello, Bill. (*Crosses L. quickly towards door c.*)

WARD. (c.) Ready to go?

CHARLIE. Yes, all ready. I hate to leave you like this, Bill, but I just can't help myself. (*Shake hands.*)

WARD. I know. That's all right. Won't I see you again?

CHARLIE. (*At door L.C.*) Well, will you be in all the evening?

WARD. I don't expect to be—but if you want me to——

CHARLIE. Oh, no, no, don't bother with me. You've got enough to do.

WARD. (*Up and crosses to CHARLIE*) Well, bon voyage! (*Shaking hands.*)

CHARLIE. Good-bye, Bill, and good luck! (*Opens door up L.C.*)

WARD. Same to you. (U.C. CHARLIE *exits up*)

L.C. WARD *crosses c., taking off coat.* DRAKE *enters L.I. Crosses c. to WARD. WARD, disgustedly, gives DRAKE hat and coat.*)

DRAKE. (*Taking the hat and coat*) Where do you want me to go?

WARD. I don't want you to go anywhere.

DRAKE. (*Holding up hat and coat*) Then what did you give me these for? (*Puts them on chair U.R.*)

WARD. Force of habit. How did you get away from headquarters?

DRAKE. (*Crosses back of big chair R.*) They just took me name and told me to beat it.

WARD. (c.) What did Dugan say?

DRAKE. (c.) He says—you say you stole the Lombardi—"the guy that did that knows a whole lot about paintings. And your knowledge of pictures stops at the Police Gazette"—he says.

WARD. Well, he's not far wrong there.

DRAKE. You don't know any more about them than the sap you're working for, says he.

WARD. (*Smiling*) Don't know any more about them than the sap—— (*Expression changes.*) Why, that's me.

DRAKE. Sure it's you. (*Crosses back of arm-chair R.*)

WARD. (*Crossing R. side of big chair*) I don't know what to do, Drake. I've got to get a lot of money over to that hospital and I—— (*Sits on arm-chair, immediately jumps up with a cry of pain*) Ouch! (*Hangs onto left hip. DRAKE crosses c.*) What did you do to me?

DRAKE. (c.) Me?

WARD. No—me.

DRAKE. Nothing, sir. What did you think I done?

WARD. I thought you stabbed me!

DRAKE. Oh, Mr. W.! I didn't touch you—must be imagination! (*Crosses R. back of chair.*)

WARD. No, it wasn't. (*Begins to feel around left arm of chair.*) Something stuck me—I'd swear to it! (*Pricks his finger with pin in the arm of chair.*) Ow. (*Puts finger in mouth, finds pin in armchair.*) Look at that!

DRAKE. What is it, sir?

WARD. Red lemonade. Did you put that spike there?

DRAKE. No, Mr. W.

WARD. (*Yanking it out savagely*) Well, somebody—— (*As he pulls the arm cover is ripped off. Is about to put arm cover back when he notices crevice in lining, puts his hand in it curiously, finds something, slowly draws out painting; he and DRAKE stare at it.*)

DRAKE. Why, it's a picture, Mr. W.!

WARD. (*Suddenly*) Drake, get that newspaper—quick! (*DRAKE runs to desk L., picks up newspaper that CHARLIE used in Act II, takes it to WARD, who opens it, compares picture in newspaper with the canvas, holds picture and canvas up.*) Look!

DRAKE. (*Looking from one to the other*) Why—that—(*Pointing to the newspaper*)—is a picture of that!

WARD. The Lombardi.

DRAKE. The Lombardi! Holy Mackerel! How do you suppose——

WARD. Wait a minute—let me think. (*Crosses L. and sits chair L.C.*)

DRAKE. Yes, Mr. W. (*He waits impatiently. WARD sits in chair, thinks of CHARLIE trying to get him to pretend he was the thief. Pause.*) Mr. W.—are you through thinking? (*Crosses down c. level with WARD.*)

WARD. (*Impressively*) Drake, do you know who stole this picture?

DRAKE. Yes, sir—I do now.

WARD. So do I. Who was it?

DRAKE. You did!

WARD. (*Disgustedly*) No!

DRAKE. Who then?

WARD. (*Rises, coming close to DRAKE C. and speaking in a very low tone*) Mr. Burnham!

DRAKE. (*Looks at him, surprised*) What makes you think so?

WARD. Why is that picture in this room?

DRAKE. I don't know.

WARD. And why did Burnham want to pin the theft on me?

DRAKE. Yes—why did he?

WARD. (*Recalling all the details of the case*) He left London just after that Paris robbery. No one knew him on the boat—no one knew him in New York. He knew all about jails—he knew just what I ought to say to Dugan—he had all the evidence!

DRAKE. By gollies, Mr. W.—you're right.

WARD. Certainly I'm right.

DRAKE. (*With genuine surprise*) Say, you got a great brain, Mr. W., to figure out all them points as quick as that!

WARD. Oh, that's nothing!

DRAKE. Nothing! It's just like Dugan does it!

WARD. Is it?

DRAKE. Just the same—and, Mr. W., you remember that ad in the paper? (*WARD looks at him.*) A hundred thousand dollars' reward for the return of the picture. A hundred thousand dollars! Oh, Mr. W., you're rich again! All you got to do is to take the picture over to Dugan!

WARD. (*About to start C.D. with it, stops and thinks*) No, wait a minute. Do you know what you need in a case like this?

DRAKE. No—what?

WARD. Oh, why don't you think?

DRAKE. I can't think like you can, Mr. W.

WARD. You need proofs!

DRAKE. (*Impressed*) What proofs?

WARD. Proofs of who stole it!

DRAKE. But what about all them things you was sayin'? Ain't they proofs?

WARD. (*Shaking head wisely*) Not enough to make it a sure thing, Drake. I've got to catch Mr. Burnham with the goods!

DRAKE. How do you mean? (*Crosses R. of chair.*)

WARD. Here—help me get the picture back in here. (*They both begin pushing the picture back into the arm of the chair.*)

DRAKE. But what for?

WARD. (*Disgustedly*) Try to use your konk! (*Pointing to head.*)

DRAKE. But Mr. Burnham's left and his baggage is gone.

WARD. He won't go without this picture, will he?

DRAKE. You ain't goin' to let him take the picture? (*Drops down R. front of chair.*)

WARD. Take it? No! But when he comes for it—I'll be layin' for him and just as he gets his hands on it—(*Stops and thinks*)—I'll yell "Stick 'em up!" We've got him with the goods—haven't we?

DRAKE. Say, Mr. W., what a detective you'd make!

WARD. I'll show you what a detective I'd make! But I've got to get a gat!

DRAKE. I'll get you one.

WARD. Wait a minute—I've got to have a derby—can't be a detective without a derby— (*Gets derby from chair up stage.*)

DRAKE. Why, Mr. W.—damned if you don't look like a bull!

WARD. I do, eh?

DRAKE. Sure—if I didn't know you, I'd think you was one.

WARD. (*Crosses L., struts about in imitation of DUGAN*) Now, listen, Drake——

DRAKE. Yes, chief.

(*WARN Knock.*)

WARD. Now, get this.

DRAKE. I'm listenin', chief.

WARD. Duck over to Dugan's and tip him off that I want to spiel with him.

DRAKE. Yes, chief. (*Crosses U.L.*)

WARD. (*Crosses to DRAKE*) But, listen—don't put him wise about the picture. Got me?

(*KNOCK.*)

DRAKE. (*Saluting*) Right, chief! (*Crosses c.*
WARD *crosses down R. There is a knock at the door. DRAKE turns to WARD for orders.*)

WARD. (*Impersonating DUGAN, low tone*) Wait a minute—— (*Makes sure arm of chair is as it was originally, takes a quick, business-like glance about the room.*) See who it is. (*He stands R.C., on the alert, arms folded. DRAKE opens door suddenly.*)

(*FLORENCE enters. FLORENCE stops, looks from WARD to DRAKE, bewildered by WARD's strange manner.*)

FLORENCE. Why, Bill!

WARD. (*Very polite, but with dignity*) Miss Osborne, I believe——

FLORENCE. (*Crosses R.*) I was so afraid——

WARD. One moment—please. (*Crosses part way to DRAKE L., speaks quietly, but like DUGAN*) You know what you're to do?

DRAKE. Yes, Chief.

WARD. (*After a moment's pause, thinking, very quietly*) Then go!

DRAKE. (*Saluting*) Right, Chief! (*He exits up L.C. WARD turns to FLORENCE.*)

WARD. (*Crosses down c.*) Won't you be seated?

FLORENCE. (*Crosses down L.*) Bill, what is it? What's happened?

WARD. Just working on a little job, that's all.

FLORENCE. But I mean about Mr. Dugan—the detective——

WARD. Dugan? (*Coming close to her.*) Tell me what you know of Dugan! (*She looks at him in amazement. A little gruffly*) The truth now—(*More softly*)—dear!

FLORENCE. Why are you acting like this?

WARD. Acting? (*Paces up and down.*) You never happened to catch me before when I've been working—that's all.

FLORENCE. Working?

WARD. (*Like himself*) Yes. You've only seen me before at social affairs—parties—and all that. You just never met me when I had an important case or job on hand.

FLORENCE. But what do you mean by case and job? (*To front of chair c.*)

WARD. First—tell me what you mean about this—this Dugan.

FLORENCE. (*Sits*) Well, you remember the telephone I had that father wanted to see me?

WARD. (*Like detective*) Go on.

FLORENCE. Well, when I saw father he told me—

WARD. That he had heard from Dugan.

FLORENCE. (*Surprised*) Why, yes.

WARD. And it was Dugan who tipped your father off that I stole the Lombardi.

FLORENCE. Why, Bill, how did you know?

WARD. It's my business to know. (*Pulls back coat and replaces coat quickly.*) You remember I asked you not to believe anything you heard about me?

FLORENCE. Yes, and I thought of that the moment father told me. And I came back here to say,

"Bill, I don't believe it"—just as I promised I would. Dugan said Drake had sworn you did it.

WARD. Yes. I made Drake do it.

FLORENCE. You did—why?

WARD. Because—I love you, Florence.

FLORENCE. Because you love me?

WARD. Yes—listen, dear—your father doesn't like me and doesn't want you to marry me. That's true, isn't it?

FLORENCE. Yes.

WARD. Well, I hadn't worked at my old job for years—just then I heard that your father's picture had been stolen and I knew that picture meant everything to him—and I thought if I could get it back for him it might give him a better opinion of me—

FLORENCE. But, Bill, this afternoon you didn't know the Lombardi was father's.

WARD. That's what I made you think——

FLORENCE. But I can't understand why——

WARD. Listen, dear—don't try to. Only, if I do return it to him, it will please him, won't it?

FLORENCE. Please him! Well, he'd think you were the greatest man on earth. Oh, but Bill, do you really think you can?

WARD. (*Sits on arm of chair*) Think I can! I can put my hand on that picture now—if I want to.

FLORENCE. (*Looks at BILL, then to liquor on desk as if he'd been drinking. Suddenly figuring out what the matter is*) Oh, Bill, I'm afraid you've broken your promise about—— (*Indicates decanter, crosses to desk L.*)

WARD. (*R. More like himself*) About drinking? No—oh, no——

FLORENCE. Honestly, Bill, haven't you been near it?

WARD. Oh, yes, I've been near it. I've walked around that desk—looked at it—talked to it—I even patted it on the neck. You know, we've been pretty

close pals. I don't want Mr. Barleycorn to think—(*Pointing to decanter*)—just because we've dissolved partnership that I'd forgotten him. Or that I'd change my opinion of Volstead.

FLORENCE. You're positive you haven't renewed your friendly relations and out of pity for his loneliness sort of gone to him—taken him—(*Pantomime of picking up decanter*)—gently by the neck, tipped him over and—(*Pantomime of pouring drink and drinking it*)—kissed and made up?

WARD. Positive. But I did pour a small drink. Looked at it, longed for it, and then poured it right back in the bottle. And anyone who knows me knows if I can come that close to a drink and not take it, I can find anything that was ever stolen.

FLORENCE. Bill—you say you can put your hands on that picture right now?

WARD. Yes—I can.

(*WARN Phone.*)

FLORENCE. Then why don't you?

WARD. I want to get the crook at the same time—catch him with the goods. (*Phone bell rings. WARD, assuming detective manner, again signals FLORENCE to be quiet; speaks into phone*) Hello—that's what he does—Who's speaking?—Hold the wire—(*Shows surprise.*) It's Leila Leigh.

FLORENCE. What does she want?

WARD. John.

FLORENCE. What can she want of him?

WARD. Want to know? I'll tell you. (*Into phone, imitation of JOHN*) Hello? Yes—you will? Are you sure? (*To FLORENCE*) She's going to run off with him.

FLORENCE. Not elope?

WARD. Sure.

FLORENCE. Oh, that's frightful—she mustn't.

WARD. Don't you want her to? Leave it to me—(*Into phone*) Listen, my sweetheart—meet me here

—half an hour—I shall be waiting—good-bye, my darling! (*Hangs up receiver.*)

FLORENCE. Oh, Bill, do you think you can stop it?

WARD. I know I can! (*Smiles, shows badge.*)

FLORENCE. (*Crosses R. to BILL*) Is there anything I can do to help you?

WARD. Do you know where you can find that loud-mouthed fellow?

FLORENCE. I think I can find him.

WARD. And get him here in half an hour?

FLORENCE. I'll try. (*Starts excitedly for door up L.C.*)

WARD. I wish I could go with you, but I don't dare leave here.

FLORENCE. Of course not—and my car is downstairs. (*Crosses hurriedly up to L.C. door.*)

WARD. Wait a minute. (*Goes to window R. and looks out.*) Yes, it's there—I had it watched.

FLORENCE. Dear old Sherlock. (*Opens door and GEORGE FLINT enters. He is WARD's uncle, whom he described in previous act. He is ninety years old, wears long scrawny side-whiskers, has a mean, hard expression, never smiles, talks in short, jerky manner, carries a long black suitcase.*)

WARD. (*Not at all pleased to see FLINT*) Oh, so it's you! (*To FLORENCE*) Don't be frightened—it's my uncle—Miss Osborne—Mr. George Flint.

FLORENCE. How do you do? (*Exits L.C.*)

FLINT. (*Coming down to BILL with hand outstretched*) My dear nephew, I haven't seen you in months. I'm glad to see you, William. (*WARD ignores hand.*)

WARD. Well, I'm not glad to see you!

FLINT. (*C.*) William, how dare you insult your uncle that way!

WARD. Then I'll try another way, Uncle.

FLINT. William, have you been drinking?

WARD. You didn't leave me enough to buy a drink. Now, what did you do with my money?

FLINT. I'm here to explain that, William, but you must be a little more patient. I am very nervous and tired. I've just come from Atlanta.

WARD. How did you escape?

FLINT. Escape?

WARD. Yes—or were you pardoned?

FLINT. Upon my soul, William, you act and talk quite strangely. I have been in the South for my health. I've lost my nerves completely.

WARD. Well, you had your nerve with you when you took everything I had and left me here broke.

FLINT. (*Looks at him in amazement*) Left you broke? Why, I simply did my duty as per the will. I took your securities and invested them, and I left thirty-two thousand dollars in the bank for you three months ago—is that leaving you broke?

WARD. That was gone long ago. How much did you lose for me?

FLINT. Lose for you? Why, William, you were never in danger of losing your money. The Trust Company was a bit shaky for a little while, but it turned out just as I knew it would.

WARD. (*Manner is completely changed; is excited*) You mean to say I'm not broke?

FLINT. Broke? On the contrary—you're quite rich—I've doubled your money.

WARD. Nunky! Dear old Nunky! Sit down, Nunky—— (*Leads FLINT to chair c., seats him, crosses to chair r.*) I get the same chill—thrill—every time I look at you—— Have a smoke.

FLINT. No, I can't smoke.

WARD. Drink?

FLINT. (*His mouth close to the telephone*) No—my physician advises I take up——

WARD. Who are you phoning to?

FLINT. I'm not phoning. I say, my physician wants me to find a quiet place——

WARD. You're going to stay right here with me, Nunky.

FLINT. But I must have complete rest, William.
(*WARN Lights.*)

WARD. That's what you'll get. (*Hits table, which scares FLINT. DRAKE crosses on balcony, takes a few cautious steps, stops, only visible from knees down.*) Hush! (*Switches off lights.*)

FLINT. Don't do that—William—I'm more nervous in the dark. (*Crosses R. to big chair.*)

WARD. Keep quiet! (*Tiptoes down R. as man's feet disappear off R.*) Ssh! (*Listens at door R., is about to enter room, when DRAKE pushes door open, almost knocking WARD over.*) What's the matter with you? Sneaking in like that! I'd a shot you if I had a gun!

DRAKE. Gun? (*Running toward FLINT, who is crossing U.C.L.*) No, you don't! Drop that bag, and stick up your hands.

FLINT. (*Awfully scared and nervous, drops bag and holds up hands*) William, what is going on here?

(*WARN Lights Up.*)

WARD. (*To DRAKE, going up and grabbing him by the collar*) What's the matter with you? This is my uncle.

(*LIGHTS Up.*)

DRAKE. Pardon me. I thought he was a grip-snatcher.

WARD. Go to my room, Uncle. Take him in, Drake.

DRAKE. Yes, Mr. W. (*To FLINT*) This way, kid. (*Opens door. FLINT exits L.2.*)

WARD. What did Dugan say?

DRAKE. He'll be right over. But he talked awful rough to me. (*Crosses R. to WARD.*)

WARD. That's right—we have to do that, Drake.

DRAKE. (*Showing him pistol*) And here's your gat—and I got one for myself. (*Showing another*) And here's something else I got for you.

(*WARN Buzzer.*)

WARD. What?

DRAKE. (*Showing blackjack*) That's a sweet patootie—to slough a mug over the konk—no noise—no smoke—no missing fire—just zowie!—like that—and millions of birds begin to sing to him. Take it.

WARD. A sweet patootie—eh? Where'd you get all these?

DRAKE. I bought 'em off of the waiter.

WARD. Can't he do well enough on checks without using these? (*Bus.*) This is no good. I can't get it out of my pocket. (*Buzzer.*) See who it is! (*DRAKE starts.*) Wait! (*DRAKE stops, low deliberate tones. WARD places chair c. stage.*) Get behind that curtain. (*Indicating U.C. DRAKE sneaks U.C.*) And, Drake——

DRAKE. Yes, Chief——

WARD. Keep your ears open. (*DRAKE salutes and goes behind c. balcony curtain. WARD crosses down R.*) Come in!

(*DUGAN enters up L.C., closes door, looks at WARD.*)

DUGAN. Hello, Ward.

WARD. Hello, Dugan.

DUGAN. Did you send for me?

WARD. Yes.

DUGAN. Well, you had your nerve with you. What do you want? (*Pause.*)

WARD. (*A little nervous, but a different kind than Act II*) Sit down.

DUGAN. (*Starts for chair L.*) Thanks.

WARD. Here! (*Pointing to chair he has placed c.*)

(DUGAN sits. WARD sits R. of DUGAN. DUGAN tilts hat on back of head, crosses legs. WARD does same as DUGAN, puts thumbs in armholes of vest, tilts back in chair. Once or twice through this DRAKE has peeked out of curtain. At this point, window-shade back of DRAKE rolls up with a bang. WARD falls or nearly falls over backward in chair.)

DRAKE. I'm sorry, Chief. (*Looks up stage again.*)

DUGAN. (*Used to being called Chief*) That's all right. (*DRAKE looks at DUGAN in query. WARD looks at DUGAN.*) But what were you doing back there?

DRAKE. Looking for the Little Dipper!

WARD. Well, you get in there. (*Indicating door D.R.*)

DRAKE. Yes, Chief. (*Crosses down R.*)

DUGAN. I didn't tell you to go——

DRAKE. (*At door R.*) My chief is Mr. W., Mr. D.——

DUGAN. Oh, I see.

DRAKE. And he's just as good a detective as you are. (*Opens door R.I.*)

WARD. Go in your kitchen and look for your little dipper.

DRAKE. Yes, Chief. (*Exits R.I.*)

DUGAN. Well, Chief—what's it all about?

WARD. (*Very bold*) You know what about—the Lombardi.

DUGAN. Do you know where it is?

WARD. (*Quickly, before he thinks*) Yes.

DUGAN. (*Instantly interested, turning suddenly*) What?

WARD. (*Startled*) Well—I mean by that—I say I mean—that—what I mean is—I think I know who took—stole—knicked it——

DUGAN. You can't get me excited with any of your dope about who stole the Lombardi—because I've got a pretty good line on that bird myself.

WARD. Then if I handed the thief over to you—that reward of fifty thousand is off?

DUGAN. Oh, no—the reward was offered in good faith and you'll get it—if you prove he's guilty—and he's convicted—but you'll have some job on your hands to get him before I do.

WARD. You think so, eh?

DUGAN. I know so—why, I'd have had him in the coop now except for one thing.

WARD. You didn't know who it was——

DUGAN. No—the picture. Why, I could have nabbed him right here in this apartment this afternoon—only I was smart to think they'd have the picture here.

WARD. Oh, that was why you didn't pinch him!

DUGAN. Sure. (*Laughs.*) Might never have got the picture if I had—so I just let him go his own way and before I'm through with him he's going to show me where that smear is—unless it's already across the ocean.

WARD. (*Very wise*) You're afraid that picture's across the ocean? (*Shaking his head thoughtfully.*) I don't think so.

DUGAN. (*Smiling.*) You don't, eh? Say, let me tell you something on the square—you won't be offended, will you?

WARD. How do I know?

DUGAN. Well, I'll tell you anyway. I've seen all kinds of queer people having a try at the detective game and they always end by making fools of themselves.

WARD. Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. If you'll

give me just one hour—I'll hand over that picture to you. (*Pause while DUGAN looks at him.*) Just one hour!

DUGAN. You know where it is?

WARD. I said I'd hand it over.

DUGAN. All right—go to it. It's a big stake—a hundred thousand.

WARD. And you don't mind paying all that?

DUGAN. I ain't payin' it—because I took over the job. I'm after the glory—that's all. I'm in line to be appointed Police Commissioner—and if I get this picture it won't hurt any.

WARD. And you'd rather have the office than all that reward?

DUGAN. Yes—I'd rather be Commissioner.

WARD. What does that job pay?

DUGAN. Ten thousand.

WARD. Is that all they get?

DUGAN. Well, that's the salary. That reward's a lot of money—and you know, Billy, money makes the mare go!

WARD. Money makes the Mayor go to Palm Beach every winter.

DUGAN. Now, Bill, you ought to have something to protect yourself.

WARD. I have. (*Takes gun from pocket.*) Here's my gat. (*Bus.*) And I've got something else—my sweet patootie! (*Takes blackjack from pocket.*) I use this to slough a konk on the mug.

DUGAN. And if you need any help, blow this! (*Gives WARD a whistle. WARD looks at it, blows it; is frightened at the noise it makes. Sudden simultaneous entrance of DRAKE, R.I., and MEEHAN, D.L. To WARD.*) What did you do that for?

WARD. I wanted to meet the boys.

DUGAN. (*Crosses U.L.*) Say, boys, I want to introduce you to Detective Ward. (*Detective laughs.*) He says if I give him one hour he'll turn up the

Lombardi—(*Boys laugh*)—and I'm going to do it—
if it's the last act of my life. So for the next hour
take your orders from Chief Ward. (*Exits L.C.*)

MEEHAN. Well, Chief—

WARD. You be on the lookout, Meehan, and tip
me if anyone comes to this apartment.

MEEHAN. Is that all you want me to do?

WARD. You better join the Russian Players and
go up on the roof and rehearse. (*MEEHAN exits R.C.*
Crosses L.C.) Got your gat? (*DRAKE pulls out*
gun.) Good! Now, listen. I've got one hour. If
Mr. Burnham doesn't show up in that time—
(*MEEHAN enters R.C.*)

MEEHAN. Chief—someone's coming in here. (*He*
exits R.C.)

(*WARN Lights.*)

WARD. (*To DRAKE*) That's Burnham. (*Indi-*
cating up L.C.) Now you switch off the lights and
get behind that curtain! (*Indicates c. balcony drap-*
ery.) I'll be back of the other one. You wait until
he gets the picture, then turn on the lights. (*Bus.*)
Quick—there he is! (*Gets behind curtain U.R.*
DRAKE switches off light and hides behind curtain.
DOOR L.2 opens and FLINT enters; sees room is dark,
so goes to button, pushes on lights. Rushes down
to armchair) Stick 'em up! (*WARD is desperately*
trying to get gun out of his pocket. DRAKE goes to
help him, accidentally discharges his own gun, which
petrifies FLINT. WARD thinks he is shot; after bus.
he sees FLINT.) Oh, get in that room— What are
you doing here, anyway? (*FLINT exits L.2. A*
knock is heard off L.C. WARD sends DRAKE off R.I.
WARD goes R., stops, feels in hip pocket, gets butt of
gun free so he can draw it quickly, then politely, but
like detective) Come in! (*Upper door up c. opens*
and SHIRLEY SHANNON enters. SHIRLEY is a typi-
cal Broadway girl, the sweetheart of CHARLIE. Fly,
up to date. Well dressed, but a bit overdressed, a bit

over made-up, slow and very deliberate) How do you do?

SHIRLEY. I do pretty well. (*Crosses c. to WARD.*)

WARD. Whom have I the honor of——

SHIRLEY. (*Laughs*) Nix cracking now—nix cracking. It ain't no honor to meet me.

WARD. What's the name?

SHIRLEY. Shirley will do.

WARD. Well—Miss Mildew.

SHIRLEY. Now nix cracking—you ain't delighted to meet me, any more than I am delighted to meet you—— (*Give him admiring look*)—although I ain't undelighted to meet you—(*Going nearer to him, half vamping*)—cause you look as if you might develop. You're Bill Ward, ain't you?

WARD. Chief Ward—yes.

SHIRLEY. (*Laughing*) Chief—and you're a pal of my—of my steady——

WARD. Your steady?

SHIRLEY. Charlie Burnham. (*Crosses L.C.*)

WARD. (*Detective manner*) What's this Burnham guy to you? (*Crosses to SHIRLEY.*)

SHIRLEY. Why, ain't you and he friends?

WARD. (*Snapping*) Never mind that! Answer me—what's Charles Burnham to you?

SHIRLEY. (*Frightened*) Say, what is all this? You act like a bull!

WARD. (*Like detective*) I want the truth from you and I'm going to get it! (*Shows badge. SHIRLEY sinks down limply in chair R. of desk. Looks as if she were going to cry. WARD is sorry for her. Change of manner; speaks kindly*) See here—you mustn't get frightened.

SHIRLEY. (*Relieved*) You did half scare the life out of me!

WARD. I didn't mean to—that's just our way.

Now you must tell me how well you know Burnham.

SHIRLEY. Real well.

WARD. (*With sympathy*) In love with him?
(SHIRLEY looks at him, then nods head "yes.")

SHIRLEY. Sure I am. (*Looks front.*)

WARD. That's too bad. (*Turns R.*)

SHIRLEY. Why? (*Up, crosses R. to WARD.*)

WARD. Because Charlie Burnham is a thief!

SHIRLEY. What? (*Playing her cards as well as she can.*) A thief! (*Laughs, plays front, leaning on table.*) Now what put that into your head?

WARD. He stole the Lombardi painting.

SHIRLEY. (*Laughing harder*) Say, that's a good one.

WARD. I just found it on him. He took it out of the arm of that chair. (SHIRLEY stops laughing, looks at him, paralyzed with fright.)

SHIRLEY. (*Going to him*) Don't give him away—oh, please, don't give him away—don't—don't—oh, please—— (*Cries.*)

WARD. You did know about it, eh?

SHIRLEY. Yes. But Charlie didn't steal it, Mr. Ward—no, he didn't. So help me God, he didn't!

WARD. Then—who did?

SHIRLEY. That devil he's working for.

WARD. Who is he working for?

SHIRLEY. John——

WARD. John—his valet?

SHIRLEY. Valet nothing. John does that just to avert suspicion. Charlie don't dare call his soul his own—and John treats him like a dog—never splits with him—and only half pays—but—(*Crosses R. to chair and sits*)—poor Charlie keeps stickin' to him—and now you got him. That's the finish.

WARD. Now wait a minute, Shirley. This is the truth—what you've been telling me?

SHIRLEY. Yes—honest. Honest it is!

WARD. I believe you. Where's John?

SHIRLEY. Waitin' for us downstairs. He's sailing at midnight with this Leigh girl.

WARD. He is?

SHIRLEY. Yes—he's got two steamship tickets made out in Burnham's name.

WARD. You try and get John up here—will you?

SHIRLEY. (*Rises*) Yes, but where is Charlie?

WARD. He's all right—and if you get John up here I think I can get Charlie off.

SHIRLEY. Do you?

WARD. I'll try. (*Crosses towards door C.L.*)

SHIRLEY. Oh, if you could—— (*Crosses to WARD.*) He's my husband, Mr. Ward. (*WARD looks at her.*)

WARD. (*Crosses U.C. and opens door*) Then hurry—if you want to save him.

SHIRLEY. (*Crosses L. to U.C.*) Yes, I will. I'll get John up here—if I have to drag him up! (*She exits up L.C.*)

(*WARD stands at door up L.C., looking after SHIRLEY. Suddenly hears something on balcony; looks through door in backing, as LEILA enters through balcony. She is veiled and carries two bags. WARD closes door up L.C. and goes to extreme L. LEILA looks about R. When WARD speaks she crosses L. with bags.*)

WARD. Hello, Leila! (*Crosses down R. of LEILA.*)

LEILA. (*Turns, frightened*) Why—— (*Recovering.*) Hello, Bill.

WARD. (*Referring to her bags*) Are you moving in here?

LEILA. (*Laughing*) No—I just came up to see if Florence was here.

WARD. Are you and Florence going traveling?

LEILA. These are just—some things——

WARD. Well, I'm going out. Would you like to wait here?

LEILA. (*Eagerly*) Oh—could I?

WARD. Certainly!

(*DOOR Slam.*)

LEILA. Who's that? (*c.*)

WARD. (*c.*) I can't see from here.

LEILA. Can't I hide somewhere? I don't want to be seen up here—alone—at night.

WARD. How about the balcony?

LEILA. Oh, yes—thanks. (*Exits on balcony or behind curtain.*)

WARD. (*Down R.* Come in. (*Assumed surprise and friendliness*) Oh, come in, John! (*JOHN enters, much on his guard.*) I thought you'd gone.

JOHN. (*Reassured, closes door*) I have been waiting for Mr. Burnham, sir. I thought he came up to say good-bye.

WARD. (*Going down R.*) Oh, he just went down. He must have been going down in one elevator as you were coming up on the other.

JOHN. Oh. Then I will find him below. (*Starts to go.*)

WARD. Oh, John. (*JOHN bows. WARD puts hand in pocket as if he were going to give him tip.*) I didn't say good-bye to you, did I?

JOHN. (*Smiling, playing the valet*) No, sir. (*Crosses R.; comes over to WARD.*)

WARD. Well, you know, to tell the truth—well, you know that fellow Dugan——

JOHN. (*No start or surprise*) I know he was here—yes, sir.

WARD. Well, he said something about you that gave me quite a shock.

JOHN. (*Even tone*) Something about me, sir?

WARD. Yes. Something that might land you in prison!

(LEILA enters and listens, horrified.)

JOHN. Mr. Ward!

WARD. I don't need to tell you I didn't believe it, John.

JOHN. Thank you, Mr. Ward. What—what did the fool say, please?

WARD. That you were sailing at midnight, and you had been making love to that little Leigh girl and induced her to elope with you.

JOHN. (*Relieved and laughing*) What damn nonsense!

WARD. It isn't true, is it?

JOHN. No, Mr. Ward. (*Crosses down a little.*)

WARD. But Dugan must have had some reason.

JOHN. Well, to tell the truth the little fool has been chasing after me. (*LEILA comes down on his L.*) I've done everything in my power to keep away from her, and if she—— (*Notices WARD looking at LEILA, turns and sees her.*)

LEILA. How dare you say that to Mr. Ward?

JOHN. Miss Leigh——

LEILA. And how dare you speak to me?

(*Door is thrown violently open and WILLIAM NOYES enters quickly; he is furious, almost runs to LEILA and JOHN. FLORENCE enters after him, leaves door open.*)

WILLIAM. What's going on here? (*Stands c.*)

LEILA. Willie! (*U.C.*)

WILLIAM. What do you mean—insulting this lady? (*Crosses to JOHN c.*)

JOHN. (*Trying to hold his temper*) Why——

WILLIAM. Why—that's what I want to know—why?

JOHN. I didn't——

WILLIAM. Shut up. You insulted her by talk-

ing to her! (*Stands with hands clenched.*) If you ever speak to her again I'll knock your brains out! (*WARD stops JOHN from striking WILLIE.*)

WARD. Go out there! (*Indicates balcony. JOHN exits R.I.*)

LEILA. Willie—won't you——

WILLIAM. No, I won't! (*Gets louder and more angry.*)

WARD. (*Fearful he will spoil his scheme*) Listen, Willie——

WILLIAM. Don't you Willie me—and I won't listen. That's all I've done for three days—listen. Now, I'm going to——

WARD. Talk for three days.

WILLIAM. Yes, and if I feel like it—for three weeks. I never heard of such audacity in my life. I knew he was too polite to be on the level. (*WARD has bus. with LEILA. FLINT enters from R.*) I don't know yet why I didn't *kill* him!

FLINT. (*Almost falling down*) I can't stand this—I——

WILLIAM. (*Crosses L. to FLINT*) What have you got to do with it?

FLINT. I'm very nervous and I want to take a nap.

WILLIAM. Go and take it. Good night.

WARD. That is my uncle. (*FLINT bows.*)

WILLIAM. Don't tell me your troubles. (*Crosses R. to WARD. FLINT exits R.*)

WARD. Who *started* him?

WILLIAM. (*To LEILA, who has all through this scene been showing how pleased she is at NOYES showing so much grit; she is about to speak and he chokes her off as she had been doing to him*) What brought you here this time of the night?

FLORENCE. Willie, Leila had planned to take a long trip.

WILLIAM. Trip? Where to? (*Crosses L. to FLO.*)

FLORENCE. (*Thinking*) California.

WILLIAM. Well, she's not going.

FLORENCE. Yes, she is.

WILLIAM. No, she isn't. (*Crosses R.*)

LEILA. Yes, I am.

WILLIAM. You keep quiet. If you do go to California, you'll go with me—as my wife. Will you marry me?

LEILA. (*Quick and shouting*) Yes!

WILLIAM. (*Quiet for first time*) What?

LEILA. I said—yes.

WILLIAM. (*More quiet*) Leila, do you mean it? (*FLORENCE crosses down L.*)

LEILA. Yes, I mean it.

WILLIAM. (*Sitting, whispering*) Why, darling—I—— (*His mouth keeps moving, but no sound is heard.*)

WARD. Now he's back to normal.

LEILA. Willie, if I'd ever known you were the way you were just now, we'd have been married a year ago. (*WILLIE smiles contentedly.*)

WARD. I'll have those grips put away, Florence, until you are ready to leave.

FLORENCE. Thanks, Bill.

WARD. One grip for each of my shoes! (*DRAKE enters R.I.*) Drake, put these away. (*Gives DRAKE the bags and whispers to him; DRAKE puts bags up L.C. during the following scene, crosses U.R. and exits R.I.*)

LEILA. (*Goes to WARD, shakes his hand, shows she is very grateful*) So long—I won't say good-bye.

WARD. So long—and good luck.

LEILA. (*Aside*) And thank you. (*Looks at FLO.*) You don't mind, Florence? (*DRAKE crosses up R. WILLIE crosses L.C.*)

FLORENCE. Why, no, dear. (LEILA kisses WARD, crosses to FLO, kisses her.) Leila, dear.

LEILA. I'll see you tomorrow?

(WARN Lights Off.)

FLORENCE. Why, of course, dear.

LEILA. Come on, Dempsey! (WILLIAM and LEILA exit.)

DRAKE. (The moment WILLIAM and LEILA exit, DRAKE calls) Chief, chief. (WARD crosses U. Whispers to WARD) John's out on the balcony now. (FLORENCE crosses R.C.)

WARD. You may go, Drake. I sha'n't want you any more tonight. (DRAKE exits.) Ready, Florence?

FLORENCE. Ready?

WARD. (Winking at her, and speaking for JOHN) For me to take you home.

FLORENCE. Yes, all ready.

WARD. Come along. I'll take you home. (FLORENCE exits L.C. WARD switches off light, humming tune, exits up L.C., slamming door.)

(LIGHTS Out.)

(JOHN enters from balcony, goes to armchair; DRAKE sneaks in from balcony, goes to push button and as JOHN draws picture he flashes on lights. WARD enters from up L.C., gun in hand, blows whistle, rushes down R. and aims at JOHN.)

(LIGHTS On.)

WARD. Stick 'em up! (At sound of whistle everybody enters; MEEHAN, DRAKE enter R.C., DUGAN, FLORENCE and SHIRLEY L.C., FLINT L.2., BURNHAM L.I.) Everybody stick 'em up! (All on stage with hands up. DUGAN stops.) Sic 'em, Drake! (DRAKE leaps from U.C. down to JOHN and grabs picture from him. MEEHAN handcuffs

JOHN.) Search him, Meehan. (MEEHAN searches JOHN.)

MEEHAN. (*To DUGAN*) How about that, chief?

DUGAN. (*Indicating WARD*) He's the boss!

MEEHAN. Here are your steamship tickets, chief. (*Gives tickets to WARD.*) Come on, get out of here. (MEEHAN and JOHN exit L.C.)

WARD. Drake, toss him over that smear!

DRAKE. Toss it to who?

WARD. (*Indicating DUGAN*) Dugan! (DRAKE hands picture to DUGAN.) Make a note of that, will you, Dugan?

DUGAN. Of what, chief?

WARD. Who returned the picture to you. You offered a hundred thousand to the man who did that.

DRAKE. Oh, Mr. W.!

WARD. Shut up!

DRAKE. A hundred thousand smackers! Wait till you see the faro bank I'll open up. (*Exits R.I.* DUGAN exits L.C. SHIRLEY crosses down L. to CHARLIE.)

WARD. Here——

CHARLIE. (*Crosses L.C. to WARD*) Bill! (*Breaks down.*)

WARD. Don't thank me—thank her. Quick, now. (*They turn up L.C.* SHIRLEY and CHARLIE exit.)

FLINT. William—what was that all about?

FLORENCE. I'll tell you, sir. Your nephew is some detective!

FLINT. Does she mean, William, that you are a detective?

WARD. That's what she meant—yes.

FLINT. Then see if you can find me a hot water bottle. (*Exits up L.*)

FLORENCE. Well, Bill—you remember the propo-

sition you made this afternoon? You asked me to wait—uncle here—money, etc.

WARD. How about tomorrow?

FLORENCE. All right—but make it early.

WARD. And, Florence, I've had a very hard day—I'm going to ask one favor of you—could I have just one drink?

FLORENCE. Sure—and I'll have one with you. (WARD *pours out liquor, fills glass with water, hands it to FLORENCE.*)

WARD. Well, Florence—from now on—or the minute we're married—everything—fifty-fifty!

FLORENCE. Everything—fifty-fifty——

WARD. (*Pours half glass of whiskey*) Same size drink—— (*Fills glass with whiskey.*)

CURTAIN

ELECTRICAL PLOT

ACT I

(Two A. M.)

Two x-ray borders, each containing one circuit of steel blue and one amber.

Footlights—One circuit of amber and one of white. There is an amber strip light in right first entrance—left first and left second entrance.

Off L.C. is a bunch light (1000 watt lamp)—also fancy floor lamp, lighted. This lamp is seen by audience, but lighted only during Acts I and III.

On wall R., wall L. and wall R.C. are brackets which work on cue in Acts I and III only.

Off the balcony R.C. hang two blue lamps, 1000 watt each (lighted), and two amber lamps, 1000 watt each (not on during Acts I and III). A floor spot lamp (1000) watt, for moonlight, which is shining into room during Acts I and III. Also two floor bunches blue on back drop.

Telephone bell and buzzer work from off stage L.C.

ACT II

(Five P. M.)

Change the floor spot lamp off R.C. from moonlight to sunlight. Point same into room.

Two hanging lamps, amber (1000 watt each), and two blue floor lamps off R.C. change to amber.



GOING CROOKED

Stand lamp in hall L.C., not lighted during Act II,
nor are the brackets on stage.

ACT III

(Ten-thirty P. M.)

Same as Act I.

HAND PROPS

ACT I

Tray of twelve used glasses, L.I. (John).
Tray, decanter and one small glass, L.C. (John).
Newspaper on desk. (Charlie).
Two bottles of liquor on table L. (John).
Writing paper, etc., on desk.
Pillow and silk coverlet off R.I. (Charlie).

ACT II

Large book on desk. (Charlie).
Newspaper on desk. (Charlie).
Sheet of note paper. (Bill).
Sheet of note paper. (Drake).
Box containing large shoes, rubber gloves and glass
cutter L.C. (Charlie).
Tea table, three cups, three saucers, plate of many
sandwiches, cake, lemon, sugar, cream, nap-
kins, etc., off L.C. (John).
Police whistle. (Dugan).
Sealed envelope L.C. (Charlie).
Cigarette case and whiskey flask L.C. (Noyes).

ACT III

Police whistle. (Bill).

Black suitcases R.C. (Leila).

Handcuffs off L.C. (Meehan).

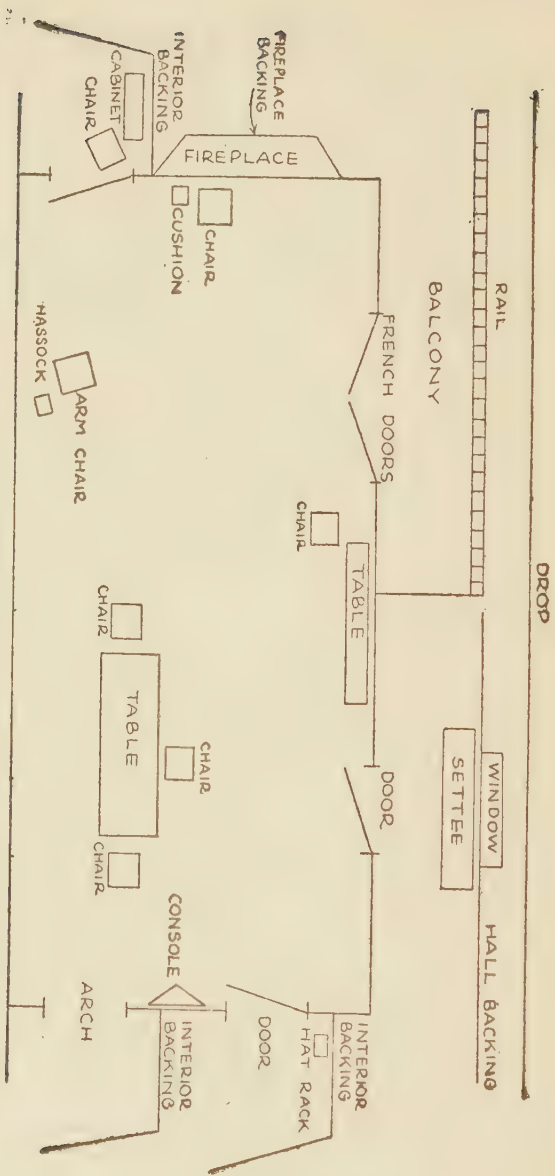
Picture in chair pocket on stage R.

Two guns off L.C. (Drake). (*One gun must shoot
sure fire*).

One blackjack L.C. (Drake).

One envelope with steamship ticket L.C. (John).

One tray of decanter, pitcher of water, two glasses
on desk.



SCENE DESIGN
"GOING CROOKED"

NOT SO LONG AGO

Comedy in a Prologue, 3 acts, and Epilogue. By Arthur Richman. 5 males, 7 females. 2 interiors, 1 exterior. Costumes, 1876. Plays a full evening.

Arthur Richman has constructed his play around the Cinderella legend. The playwright has shown great wisdom in his choice of material, for he has cleverly crossed the Cinderella theme with a strain of Romeo and Juliet. Mr. Richman places his young lovers in the picturesque New York of forty years ago. This time Cinderella is a seamstress in the home of a social climber, who may have been the first of her kind, though we doubt it. She is interested sentimentally in the son of this house. Her father, learning of her infatuation for the young man without learning also that it is imaginary on the young girl's part, starts out to discover his intentions. He is a poor inventor. The mother of the youth, ambitious chiefly for her children, shudders at the thought of marriage for her son with a sewing-girl. But the Prince contrives to put the slipper on the right foot, and the end is happiness. The play is quaint and agreeable and the three acts are rich in the charm of love and youth. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

THE LOTTERY MAN

Comedy in 3 acts, by Rida Johnson Young. 4 males, 5 females. 3 easy interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

In "The Lottery Man" Rida Johnson Young has seized upon a custom of some newspapers to increase their circulation by clever schemes. Mrs. Young has made the central figure in her famous comedy a newspaper reporter, Jack Wright. Wright owes his employer money, and he agrees to turn in one of the most sensational scoops the paper has ever known. His idea is to conduct a lottery, with *himself* as the prize. The lottery is announced. Thousands of old maids buy coupons. Meantime Wright falls in love with a charming girl. Naturally he fears that he may be won by someone else and starts to get as many tickets as his limited means will permit. Finally the last day is announced. The winning number is 1323, and is held by Lizzie, an old maid, in the household of the newspaper owner. Lizzie refuses to give up. It is discovered, however, that she has stolen the ticket. With this clue, the reporter threatens her with arrest. Of course the coupon is surrendered and Wright gets the girl of his choice. Produced at the Bijou Theater, New York, with great success. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

ON THE HIRING LINE

Comedy in 3 acts, by Harvey O'Higgins and Harriet Ford. 5 males, 4 females. Interior throughout. Costumes, modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Sherman Fessenden, unable to induce servants to remain for any reasonable length of time at his home, hits upon the novel expedient of engaging detectives to serve as domestics.

His second wife, an actress, weary of the country and longing for Broadway, has succeeded in discouraging every other cook and butler against remaining long at the house, believing that by so doing she will win her husband to her theory that country life is dead. So she is deeply disappointed when she finds she cannot discourage the new servants.

The sleuths, believing they had been called to report on the actions of those living with the Fessendens, proceeded to warn Mr. Fessenden that his wife has been receiving love-notes from Steve Mark, an actor friend, and that his daughter has been planning to elope with a thief.

One sleuth causes an uproar in the house, making a mess of the situations he has witnessed. Mr. Fessenden, however, has learned a lesson and is quite willing to leave the servant problem to his wife thereafter. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)

Price, 75 Cents.

A FULL HOUSE

A farcical comedy in 3 acts. By Fred Jackson. 7 males, 7 females. One interior scene. Modern costumes. Time, 2½ hours.

Imagine a reckless and wealthy youth who writes ardent love letters to a designing chorus girl, an attorney brother-in-law who steals the letters and then gets his hand-bag mixed up with the grip of a burglar who has just stolen a valuable necklace from the mother of the indiscreet youth, and the efforts of the crook to recover his plunder, as incidents in the story of a play in which the swiftness of the action never halts for an instant. Not only are the situations screamingly funny but the lines themselves hold a fund of humor at all times. This newest and cleverest of all farces was written by Fred Jackson, the well-known short-story writer, and is backed up by the prestige of an impressive New York success and the promise of unlimited fun presented in the most attractive form. A cleaner, cleverer farce has not been seen for many a long day. "A Full House" is a house full of laughs. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.)

Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

POLLYANNA

"The glad play," in 3 acts. By Catherine Chisholm Cushing. Based on the novel by Eleanor H. Porter. 5 males, 6 females. 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays 2¼ hours.

The story has to do with the experiences of an orphan girl who is thrust, unwelcome, into the home of a maiden aunt. In spite of the tribulations that beset her life she manages to find something to be glad about, and brings light into sunless lives. Finally, Pollyanna straightens out the love affairs of her elders, and last, but not least, finds happiness for herself in the heart of Jimmy. "Pollyanna" is a glad play and one which is bound to give one a better appreciation of people and the world. It reflects the humor, tenderness and humanity that gave the story such wonderful popularity among young and old.

Produced at the Hudson Theatre, New York, and for two seasons on tour, by George C. Tyler, with Helen Hayes in the part of "Pollyanna." (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

THE CHARM SCHOOL

A comedy in 3 acts. By Alice Duer Miller and Robert Milton. 6 males, 10 females (may be played by 5 males and 8 females). Any number of school girls may be used in the ensembles. Scenes, 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays 2½ hours.

The story of "The Charm School" is familiar to Mrs. Miller's readers. It relates the adventures of a handsome young automobile salesman, scarcely out of his 'teens, who, upon inheriting a girls' boarding-school from a maiden aunt, insists on running it himself, according to his own ideas, chief of which is, by the way, that the dominant feature in the education of the young girls of to-day should be CHARM. The situations that arise are teeming with humor—clean, wholesome humor. In the end the young man gives up the school, and promises to wait until the most precocious of his pupils reaches a marriageable age. The play has the freshness of youth, the inspiration of an extravagant but novel idea, the charm of originality, and the promise of wholesome, sanely amusing, pleasant entertainment. We strongly recommend it for high school production. It was first produced at the Bijou Theatre, New York, then toured the country. Two companies are now playing it in England. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request

DADDY LONG-LEGS

A charming comedy in 4 acts. By Jean Webster. The full cast calls for 6 males, 7 females and 6 orphans, but the play, by the easy doubling of some of the characters, may be played by 4 males, 4 females and 3 orphans. The orphans appear only in the first act and may be played by small girls of any age. Four easy interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays 2½ hours.

Many readers of current fiction will recall Jean Webster's "Daddy Long-Legs." Miss Webster dramatized her story and it was presented at the Gaiety Theatre in New York, under Henry Miller's direction, with Ruth Chatterton in the principal rôle. "Daddy Long-Legs" tells the story of Judy, a pretty little drudge in a bleak New England orphanage. One day, a visiting trustee becomes interested in Judy and decides to give her a chance. She does not know the name of her benefactor, but simply calls him Daddy Long-Legs, and writes him letters brimming over with fun and affection. From the Foundling's Home she goes to a fashionable college for girls and there develops the romance that constitutes much of the play's charm. The New York Times reviewer, on the morning after the Broadway production, wrote the following: "If you will take your pencil and write down, one below the other, the words delightful, charming, sweet, beautiful and entertaining, and then draw a line and add them up, the answer will be 'Daddy Long-Legs.' To that result you might even add brilliant, pathetic and humorous, but the answer even then would be just what it was before—the play which Miss Jean Webster has made from her book, 'Daddy Long-Legs,' and which was presented at the Gaiety last night. To attempt to describe the simplicity and beauty of 'Daddy Long-Legs' would be like attempting to describe the first breath of Spring after an exceedingly tiresome and hard Winter." "Daddy Long-Legs" enjoyed a two-years' run in New York, and was then toured for over three years. It is now published in play form for the first time. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents,

THE FAMOUS MRS. FAIR

A comedy in 4 acts. By James Forbes. 3 males, 10 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes. Plays a full evening.

An absorbing play of modern American family life. "The Famous Mrs. Fair" is concerned with a strenuous lady who returns from overseas to lecture, and consequently neglects her daughter, who is just saved in time from disaster. Acted with great success by Blanche Bates and Henry Miller. (Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) Price, 75 Cents.

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request



